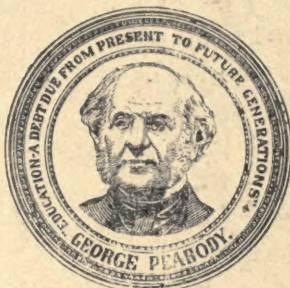



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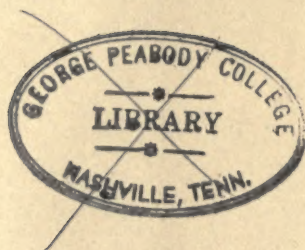


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THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Magazine Devoted to the
Enjoyment of the Play and the Theatre

EDITOR—Theodore Ballou Hinckley

Advisory and Contributing Editors

THOMAS H. DICKINSON, University of Wisconsin.

NATHANIEL W. STEPHENSON, College of Charles-
ton.

RICHARD BURTON, University of Minnesota.

STARK YOUNG, Amherst College.

S. H. CLARK, University of Chicago.

BENEDICT PAPOT, Chautauqua Institution.

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THE DRAMA

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No. 29

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STUART WALKER

THE PROLOGUE TO THE PORTMANTEAU THEATER

“As the lights in the theater are lowered the voice of MEMORY is heard as she passes through the audience to the stage.

“MEMORY—Once upon a time, but not so very long ago, you very grown-ups believed in all true things. You believed until you met the Fourteen Doubters who were so positive in their unbelief that you weakly cast aside the things that made you happy for the hapless things that they were calling life. You were afraid or ashamed to persist in your old thoughts, and strong in your folly, you discouraged your little boy and other people’s little boys from the pastimes they had loved. Yet all through the early days you had been surely building magnificent cities, and all about you laying out magnificent gardens, and with an April pool you had made infinite seas where pirates fought or mermaids played in coral caves. Then came the Doubters laughing and jeering at you, and you let your cities, and gardens, and seas go floating in the air—unseen, unsung—wonderful cities, and gardens, and seas, peopled with the realest of people. . . . So now you, and he, and I are

met at the portals. Pass through them with me. I have something there that you think is lost. The key is the tiny regret for the real things, the little regret that sometimes seems to weight your spirit at twilight and compress all life into a moment's longing. Come, pass through. You cannot lose your way. Here are your cities, your gardens, and your April pools. Come through the portals of once upon a time, but not so very long ago—today—now!

"She passes through the soft blue curtains, but unless you are willing to follow her, turn back now. There are only play-things here.

THE TRIMPLET.

"When Memory has disappeared and the blue curtains are quite still and every one who is old and irrevocably very grown-up has left the theater, the Prologue of the plays and the Device-Bearer appear at either side of the forestage. Then the Prologue speaks."*

Perhaps no better clue to the value of Mr. Walker's contribution to American drama could be found than this foreword spoken by Memory, for he is devoting himself to bringing back to us "grown-ups" the rare beauty and joy in the "true things" that make our youth and childhood a constant fragrant recollection. In his work we do build again magnificent cities, lay out magnificent gardens, and make of April pools infinite seas where pirates fight and mermaids play in coral caves. And the "tiny regret" becomes, when we leave the book or the theater of Mr. Walker, a precious regret, for it has given us a richer experience as we relive, after so long an absence, those early rituals and find thrown about

* From *Portmanteau Plays*, by Stuart Walker; Stewart and Kidd, 1917.

them a mellowed light, the light of beautiful things once lost, but now, through this experience of the magic curtains, to be recalled at will. We of this country have a constant growing need for instruction in our youth as to how to play and in our maturity how to preserve a childlike eagerness.

Such an achievement as Mr. Walker's may not at first glance seem of major value in art. Certainly it is not in the spirit of most American effort, but just as certainly it is the more needed. Sincere youthful phantasy often humorous, often elfish, often glimpsing the roots of life, has the worth of all that is simple and primitive. Mr. Walker has an individual field, though as yet a limited one, in which he is a master, a field in which Lord Fauntleroy might have played and become a real boy instead of remaining a sentimentalized feminine ideal.

To compare Mr. Walker to Dunsany or Laurence Housman is merely to say that he is one of the pioneers in the rediscovery of the country of romance which bids fair to reclaim us all as settlers within the next few years. His imagination has neither the virility nor the originality of the author of *The Gods of the Mountain*, and the avoidance of sophistication is a basic quality of all his work. The exotic and exquisite Housman of *The House of Joy*, and *The Field of Clover*, is at the antipodes. Rather does Mr. Walker carry on the Stevenson traditions, tempering the riotous outdoor health of R. L. S. with the fantastic humor and the sentiment of Barrie. With both he is devoted to spontaneity and the fresh outlook of youth. It doesn't matter when Stuart Walker was born. He is still a young man but he will never grow up if he lives to be ninety. He will continue on his way spreading the gospel of beauty and joyousness, an unconquerable Peter Pan. To him each

morning afresh the jolly sun will climb exuberantly over the rim of the world for he is a happy writer of plays, not a Broadway dramatist.

We shall probably never have a Maeterlinck in America or England though we may have an interpreter of what in our experience is most similar to that expressed by the great Belgian. The Romanic strain is not strong enough in us. Instead, in England Barrie has put forth work of exquisite poetic thought and in our own country Stuart Walker is one of the men who have made similar achievement; they both, however, have a way of bringing us suddenly around a corner to a Punch and Judy show. There are few Peter Pans among Continental writers. The Pierrots of Latin literature are surcharged with tragedy. Maeterlinck goes to lovely faraway dream countries for many of his settings, but the beauty of them in so far as theme is concerned is usually the beauty of tragic longing, of sacrifice, and of death. The Latin kills the good, consoling him in his last minutes with the thought that it is a godly thing to die, while the Anglo-Saxon reverses the situation and well and permanently disposes of the bad man, however remorseful he may be, in order that the good may be happy.

Stuart Walker has not modeled his work after Barrie or Dunsany, although the three speak a common language. Lord Dunsany's Celtic humor causes him to chortle Puck-like when people try to read symbolism into his plays. He peeks around the post and is amused that a public is trying to interpret his stories as he had no thought of their being interpreted. Barrie fares somewhat differently. There is more real symbolism in his plays than in Dunsany's but because his audience is not looking for it, it is often lost. In Stuart Walker's work, the wise do

not look for symbolism. It may be there, but there is so interesting a story that we can not be bothered with irrelevant matter. We know *Nevertheless* is a joy because we remember the days when our own mothers seemed, at the time, to lay too great stress on the importance of saying "he doesn't," when it was much nicer and easier to say "he don't." And we delight in the note of amusing youth struck in *The Very Naked Boy*. Any sister who had a younger brother, and any younger brother are carried back to the time brother was much in the way when sister's beau was calling. It is evident that Mr. Walker was a younger brother.

It was doubtless this eternally youthful spirit inspiring Stuart Walker in his own writings, that made him see the possibilities of dramatic material in Booth Tarkington's *Seventeen*, a work of real sincerity and understanding, however full of comedy. In its most successful form, this delightful quality is found in Mr. Walker's *Six Who Pass While the Lentils Boil*, a fantastic play and one of the most popular in the Portmanteau repertory, telling the story of the queen of somewhere who has committed the serious breach of etiquette of stepping on the ring toe of the king's great-aunt, a step punishable by beheading. You are quite certain all the time that the queen is not to be beheaded and that the pleasant Dreadful Headsman will not be punished for failing to perform his duty; and you know positively, whether you are a young person, or a young-old person, that something wonderful is going to happen to the Boy, although you do not know that he is going to become Sir Davie Little Boy.

Aside from his contributions to the drama of America, Mr. Walker has come to be a force in the theater. Without denying the impetus the little

theaters have given the cause of a more nobly produced drama, one who contemplates the gravestones of such enterprises scattered from Los Angeles to Greenwich Village, and then reflects upon the fact that the few art theaters extant are, almost without exception, but a year or two old, must conclude either that there is no demand for what the movement represents—though the many attempts nullify the argument in large part—or that these theaters have been in the wrong control. Undoubtedly the latter is the correct view. Though the personnel of little theater creators and managers yields an astonishing list of workers intellectually brilliant and artistically skilled, hardly a name can be found that indicates a grain of the practical acumen necessary in any undertaking which depends upon a large public for its support. The directors have usually been dictatorial and “utter” in their choice of plays, paying little attention to what even their small public has wanted, foisting uncompromisingly their standards of “higher art” upon a people who, whatever their education or technical training, feel wholly qualified to discuss art in any of its branches.

The result has been a gradual alienation of what in most cases was, at the start, a promisingly large clientele. Coupling this fact with the unbusinesslike financial foundation upon which most of the ventures begin and the utter inadequacy of the acting, you have a safe prophecy of final failure when the glamor of the new undertaking has worn away and solid achievement must hold the supporting audiences. If further reason for disaster were needed, it would be found in the complete ignorance of the workings and progress of the professional theater among the majority of little theater producers. It is sophomoric to say that because an age-old institution has glaring

faults it should be swept away and a new creation rebuilt from the foundation by inexperienced workmen. It is over-youthful to disregard wholly even David Belasco, though his principles of art may be questionable.

Mr. Walker from the age of six when he was fascinated by a toy stage, to his teens when he produced drama for the edification of the neighbors' children, to the years of service in the University of Cincinnati dramatic club, was experimenting with drama and becoming accustomed to the tools of the theater. Then he acted a bit, studied pantomime for a year under competent instructors, and arrived at last in the position of playreader, director and managing aid to the aforementioned David Belasco, a position which he held for six years. Thus his whole life has been bound up in the theater; he knows what the public wants, the worst public and the best public; he knows the detail of efficient business management; he has the education—the great deficiency of most managers,—which has opened to him the wide horizon presented by the drama of other lands and other centuries with its varying forms, techniques, and devices; and with all this he has preserved, as we know from his own plays, a fine simple poetic spirit which many a little theater enthusiast might envy.

Thus it was that when he undertook the Portman-teau theater scheme, he proceeded practically and slowly, organizing its business affairs judiciously, selecting the best plays that in his judgment the better public would continue to pay to see, and finding competent though relatively unknown and therefore inexpensive players whose naturalness and sincerity and finished ensemble it is a delight to see and hear. In his stagecraft Mr. Walker has used the best results in light and color of the little theaters—and

this has been the great field of success for such ventures. While his settings have not possessed the extreme beauty and fine truth of those of the Chicago Little Theatre, or of some of the Washington Square productions, they have preserved a sustained beauty of simple, significant effectiveness and have occasionally, as in the mountain background for the second act of *The Lady of the Weeping Willow Tree*, shown a rare feeling for color mood.

Though the plays presented have always possessed primarily wide human appeal, they have, at all time, measured up to little theater standards of freshness, sincerity, and beauty. It is true that, like the producer's own plays, they have lacked intensity, have failed to "plumb the depths" and to climb the giant peaks of life. One is glad that he has neither the sex nor the horror obsession of so many art theaters; it may be that he desires to fill a practically vacant niche in the drama temple and so limits his design; the limitation, however, seems to be due to a peculiar timidity of expression or lack of growth to full understanding of fundamental life values. His menu is too largely caviar, salad, sweets and nuts, to satisfy the full blooded diner who regularly patronizes his caravansary. Never in his repertory does he, to use a stale expression, come to grips with experience, and never in his plays, except in *The Lady of the Weeping Willow Tree*, has he given us a greatly ennobling work of art. This play and the vision which led him to produce *The Night in Avignon*, by our able but neglected poet Cale Young Rice, and the plays of Lord Dunsany, promise us, however, in Mr. Walker a great dramatist and an even greater producer who will go farther still in living up to the best standards of both little and professional theaters.

VANDERVOORT SLOAN.

“The status of the playhouse in society is as vital as the status of the university in society. The dignity and efficiency of the one demand the same safeguarding against inward deterioration as the dignity and efficiency of the other.”—From The Playhouse and the Play, by Percy MacKaye.

THE LADY OF THE WEEPING WILLOW TREE

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

By
Stuart Walker

CHARACTERS

O-SODE-SAN, an old woman.

O-KATSU-SAN.

OBAA-SAN.

THE GAKI OF KOKORU, an eater of unrest.

RIKI, a poet.

AOYAGI. = the tree

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THE LADY OF THE WEEPING WILLOW TREE

ACT I

*[Scene: At the right back is a weeping willow tree,
at the left the simple little house of Obaa-San.]*

O-SODE-SAN and O-KATSU-SAN come in.]

O-SODE-SAN. Oi! . . . Oi! . . . Obaa-San!

O-KATSU-SAN. Obaa-San! . . . Grandmother!

O-SODE-SAN. She is not there.

O-KATSU-SAN. Poor Obaa-San.

O-SODE-SAN. Why do you always pity Obaa-San?
Are her clothes not whole? Has she not her full store
of rice?

O-KATSU-SAN. Ay!

O-SODE-SAN. Then what more can one want—a
full hand, a full belly, and a warm body!

O-KATSU-SAN. A full heart, perhaps.

O-SODE-SAN. What does Obaa-San know of a
heart, silly O-Katsu? She has had no husband to die
and leave her alone. She has had no child to die and
leave her arms empty.

O-KATSU-SAN. Hai! Hai! She does not know.

O-SODE-SAN. She has had no lover to smile upon
her and then—pass on.

O-KATSU-SAN. But Obaa-San is not happy.

O-SODE-SAN. PSS-s!

O-KATSU-SAN. She may be lonely because she has
never had anyone to love or to love her.

O-SODE-SAN. How could one love Obaa-San? She

is too hideous for love. She would frighten the children away—and even a drunken lover would laugh in her ugly face. Obaa-San! The grandmother!

O-KATSU-SAN. O-Sode, might we not be too cruel to her?

O-SODE-SAN. If we could not laugh at Obaa-San, how then could we laugh? She has been sent from the dome of the sky for our mirth.

O-KATSU-SAN. I do not know! I do not know! Sometimes I think I hear tears in her laugh!

O-SODE-SAN. PSS-s! That is no laugh. Obaa-San cackles like an old hen.

O-KATSU-SAN. I think she is unhappy now and then—always, perhaps.

O-SODE-SAN. Has she not her weeping willow tree—the grandmother?

O-KATSU-SAN. Ay. She loves the tree.

O-SODE-SAN. The grandmother of the weeping willow tree! It's well for the misshapen and the childless and the loveless to have a tree to love.

O-KATSU-SAN. But, O-Sode, the weeping willow tree can not love her. Perhaps even old Obaa-San longs for love.

O-SODE-SAN. Do we not come daily to her to talk to her? And to ask her all about her weeping willow tree?

O-KATSU-SAN. Oi! Obaa-San.

[*A sigh is heard.*]

O-SODE-SAN. What was that, O-Katsu!

O-KATSU-SAN. Someone sighed—a deep, hard sigh.

O-SODE-SAN. Oi! Obaa-San! Grandmother!

[*The sigh is almost a moan.*]

O-KATSU-SAN. It seemed to come from the weeping willow tree.

O-SODE-SAN. O-Katsu! Perhaps some evil spirit haunts the tree.

O-KATSU-SAN. Some hideous Gaki! Like the Gaki of Kokoru—the evil ghost that can feed only on the unrest of humans. Their unhappiness is his food. He has to find misery in order to live and win his way back once more to humanity. To different men he changes his shape at will and sometimes is invisible.

O-SODE-SAN. Quick, Katsu, let us go to the shrine—and pray—and pray.

O-KATSU-SAN. Ay. There!

[*They go out. THE GAKI appears.*]

THE GAKI. Why did you sigh?

THE VOICE OF THE TREE. O Gaki of Kokoru! My heart hangs within me like the weight of years on Obaa-San.

THE GAKI. Why did you moan?

THE TREE. The tree is growing—and it tears my heart.

THE GAKI. I live upon your unrest. Feed me! Feed me!

[*The tree sighs and moans and THE GAKI seems transported with joy.*]

THE TREE. Please! Please! Give me my freedom.

THE GAKI. Where then should I feed? Unless I feed on your unhappiness I should cease to live—and I must live.

THE TREE. Someone else, perchance, may suffer in my stead.

THE GAKI. I care not where or how I feed. I am in the sixth hell, and if I die in this shape I must remain in this hell through all the eternities. One like me must feed his misery by making others miserable. I can not rise through the other five hells to human life unless I have human misery for my food.

THE TREE. Oh, can't you feed on joy—on happiness, on faith?

THE GAKI. Faith? Yes, perhaps—but only on perfect faith. If I found perfect faith—ah, then—I dare not dream.—There is no faith.

THE TREE. Do not make me suffer more. Let me enjoy the loveliness of things.

THE GAKI. Would you have someone else suffer in your stead?

THE TREE. Someone else—someone else—

THE GAKI. Ay—old Obaa-San—she whom they call the grandmother.

[THE TREE *moans.*]

THE GAKI. She will suffer in your stead.

THE TREE. No! No! She loves me! She of all the world loves me! No—not she!

THE GAKI. It shall be she!

THE TREE. I shall not leave!

THE GAKI. You give me better food than I have ever known. You wait! You wait!

THE TREE. Here comes Obaa-San! Do not let her suffer for me!

THE GAKI. You shall be free—as free as anyone can be—when I have made the misery of Obaa-San complete.

THE TREE. She has never fully known her misery. Her heart is like an iron-bound chest long-locked, with the key lost.

THE GAKI. We shall find the key! We shall find the key!

THE TREE. I shall warn her.

THE GAKI. Try!

THE TREE. Alas! I can not make her hear! I can not tell her anything.

THE GAKI. She can not understand you! She can

not see me unless I wish it! Earth people never see or hear!

THE TREE. Hai! Hai! Hai!

[OBAA-SAN enters. *She is old, very, very old, and withered and misshapen. There is only laughter in your heart when you look at OBAA-SAN unless you see her eyes. Then—*]

OBAA-SAN. My tree! My little tree! Why do you sigh?

THE TREE. Hai! Hai! Hai!

OBAA-SAN. Sometimes I think I pity you. Yes, dear tree!

THE TREE. Hai! Hai! Hai!

THE GAKI. Now I am a traveller. She sees me pleasantly.—Grandmother!

OBAA-SAN. Ay, sir!

THE GAKI. Which way to Kyushu?

OBAA-SAN. You have lost your way. Far, far back beyond the ferry landing at Ishiyama to your right. That is the way to Kyushu.

THE GAKI. Ah, me!

OBAA-SAN. You are tired. Will you not sit and rest?—Will you not have some rice?

THE GAKI. Oh, no.—Where is your brood, grandmother?

OBAA-SAN. I have no brood. I am no grandmother. I am no mother.

THE GAKI. What! Are there tears in your voice?

OBAA-SAN. Tears! Why should I weep?

THE GAKI. I do not know, grandmother!

OBAA-SAN. I am no grandmother!—Who sent you here to laugh at me?—O-Sode-San? 'Tis she who laughs at me, because—

THE GAKI. No one, old woman—

OBAA-SAN. Yes, yes, old woman. That is it. Old

woman!—Who are you? I am not wont to cry my griefs to any one.

THE GAKI. Griefs! You have griefs!

OBAA-SAN. Ay! Even I—she whom they call Obaa-San—have griefs.—Even I! But they are locked deep within me. No one knows!

THE GAKI. Someone must know.

OBAA-SAN. I shall tell no one.

THE GAKI. Someone must know!

OBAA-SAN. You speak like some spirit—and I feel that I must obey.

THE GAKI. Someone must know!

OBAA-SAN. I shall not speak. Who cares?—What is it I shall do? Tell my story—unlock my heart—so that O-Sode-San may laugh and laugh and laugh. Is it not enough that some evil spirit feeds upon my deep unrest?

THE GAKI. How can one feed upon your unrest when you lock it in your heart? [*The voices of O-SODE-SAN and O-KATSU-SAN are heard calling to OBAA-SAN.*] Here come some friends of yours. Tell them your tale.

[*He goes out.*]

OBAA-SAN. Strange. I feel that I must speak out my heart.

[*O-SODE-SAN and O-KATSU-SAN come in.*]

O-SODE-SAN. Good morning, grandmother!

OBAA-SAN. [*With a strange wistfulness in her tone.*] Good morning, O-Sode-San. Good morning, O-Katsu-San. May the bright day bring you a bright heart.

O-KATSU-SAN. And you, Obaa-San.

O-SODE-SAN. How is the weeping willow tree, grandmother!

OBAA-SAN. It is there—close to me.

O-SODE-SAN. And does it speak to you, grandmother—

OBAA-SAN. I am no grandmother! I am no grandmother! I am no mother! O-Sode, can you not understand? I am no mother. I am no wife.—There is no one.—I am only an old woman.—In the spring I see the world turn green and I hear the song of happy birds and feel the perfumed balmy air upon my cheek—and every spring that cheek is older and more wrinkled and I have always been alone. I see the stars on a summer night and listen for the dawn—and there never has been a strong hand to touch me nor tiny fingers to reach out for me. I have heard the crisp autumn winds fight the falling leaves and I have known that long winter days and nights were coming—and I have always been alone—alone. I have pretended to you—what else could I do? Grandmother! Grandmother! Every time you speak the name, the emptiness of my life stands before me like a royal Kakemono all covered with unliving people.

O-SODE-SAN. You never seemed to care.

OBAA-SAN. Did I not care! Grandmother! Grandmother! Why? Because I loved a weeping willow tree. Because to me it was real. It was my baby. But no lover ever came to woo. No words ever came to me.—Think you, O-Sode-San, that the song of birds in the branches is ease to an empty heart. Think you that the wind amongst the leaves soothes the mad unrest in here. [*She beats her breast.*] I have no one—no one. I talk to my weeping willow tree—but there is no answer—no answer, O-Sode-San—only stillness—and yet—sometimes I think I hear a sigh.—Grandmother! Grandmother! There! Is that enough? I've bared my heart to you. Go spread the news—I am lonely and old—old.—I have always been lonely. Go spread the news.

O-KATSU-SAN. No, Obaa-San. We shall not spread the news. No one shall know.

O-SODE-SAN. But—we pity you.

OBAA-SAN. I need no pity.—Now my heart is unlocked. The dread Gaki of Kokoru who feeds upon unrest can come to me and feed upon my pain. I care not.

THE TREE. Hai! Hai! Hai!

O-KATSU-SAN. Someone sighs.

OBAA-SAN. Yes. It is my tree. Perhaps there, too, someone in deep distress is imprisoned—as I am imprisoned in this body.—Hai! You do not know. You do not know!

O-SODE-SAN. Obaa-San—we have been hurting. I never knew—I am sorry, Obaa-San.

O-KATSU-SAN. You have been lonely, Obaa-San, but you have always been lonely. I know the having and I know the losing.

O-SODE-SAN. Ay. 'T is better to long for love than to have it—and then lose. Look at me, whom the villagers call the bitter one. He came to me so long ago.—It was spring, Obaa-San, and perfume filled the air and birds were singing and his voice was like the voice from the sky-dome—all clear and wonderful. Together we saw the cherry trees bloom—*once*: and on a summer night we saw the wonder of the firefly fête. My heart was young and life was beautiful. We watched the summer moon—and when the autumn came—Ai! Ai! Ai! Obaa-San.—I knew a time of love—and oh, the time of hopelessness! And I shut my heart. I did not see, Obaa-San.

OBAA-SAN. You knew his love, O-Sode-San. You touched his hand.

O-KATSU-SAN. But what is that? To her—my little girl—I gave all my dreams. I felt her baby hands in mine and in the night I could reach out to her. I

lived for her. And then, one day—Obaa-San, I had known the joy of motherhood and I had known the ecstasy of—child—and now— Her little life with me was only a dream of spring, but still my back is warm with the touch of her babyhood. The little toys still dance before my eyes. Oh, that was long ago.—Now all is black.

OBAA-SAN. All blackness can never fill a mother's heart.—O-Katsu-San, you have known the baby's hand in yours. But I am old—and I have never known, can never know.—I'd go to the lowest hells if once I might but know the touch of my own child's hand.

THE TREE. Hai! Hai! Hai!

OBAA-SAN. Just once—for one short day—to fill the empty place in my heart that has always been empty—and a pain—

O-SODE-SAN. Who is that man, Obaa-San?

OBAA-SAN. There? That is a stranger seeking for Kyushu.

O-KATSU-SAN. He seems to wish to speak to you.

OBAA-SAN. A strange man. 'T was he who seemed to make me unlock my heart to you.

O-SODE-SAN. Then shall we go.—And we'll return, Obaa-San.

OBAA-SAN. Grandmother!

O-KATSU-SAN. We'll laugh no more.

[*They leave. OBAA-SAN turns to the tree. THE GAKI enters, strangely agitated.*]

THE GAKI. Obaa-San, for so they called you, tell me—did you say you'd go to the lowest hells if you might know the touch of your own child?

OBAA-SAN. Forever—could I but fill this emptiness in my mother-heart.

THE GAKI. Would you really pay?

OBAA-SAN. Yes, yes. But why do you ask?—Who are you?

THE GAKI. I am a stranger bound for Kyushu.

OBAA-SAN. Why do you, too, make sport of me?

THE GAKI. Go you into your house and come not till I call.

[OBAA-SAN obeys under a strange compulsion.]

THE TREE. Hai! Hai! Hai!

THE GAKI. You can not feed me now. That cry was the wind amongst your branches. Come. I bid you come to life, to human form.

THE TREE. I do not wish to come.

THE GAKI. I bid you come!

[When he touches the trunk of the tree, AOYAGI steps forth. She is small. Her little body is swathed in brown and from her arms hang long sleeves like the branches of the weeping willow. At first she shrinks. Then freedom takes hold on her and she opens her arms wide.]

THE GAKI. You are free!

AOYAGI. Free!

THE GAKI. As free as one in life. You are bound to the tree as one might be bound to his body in a dream—but you may wander as one wanders in a dream—free until the waking—then when the tree suffers, you shall suffer. Though you be leagues away, you shall suffer.—But first you shall dream.—Now you are to be the daughter of Obaa-San.

AOYAGI. Oi!

THE GAKI. Do not call yet.—You are to wed the first young man who passes here and you are to follow him.

AOYAGI. But—Obaa-San?

THE GAKI. She shall feed me with her new-made misery.

AOYAGI. No—no—she loved me so!

THE GAKI. She shall feed me. You will be happy.

[*He disappears.*]

AOYAGI. Free! And happy!

[THE GAKI'S voice is heard calling OBAA-SAN. She comes in and looks about. At last her old tired eyes see AOYAGI. For a moment they face each other.]

AOYAGI. Hai.

OBAA-SAN. A dream!

AOYAGI. Mother—

[OBAA-SAN stands mute. She listens—yearning for the word again.]

OBAA-SAN. Have you lost your way?

AOYAGI. No, mother—

[OBAA-SAN does not know what to think or do. A strange giddiness seizes on her and a great light fills her eyes.]

OBAA-SAN. How beautiful the name! But I am only Obaa-San. Your mother—

[*She shakes her old head sadly.*]

AOYAGI. Obaa-San, my mother.

[OBAA-SAN lays her hand upon her heart. Then she stretches out her arms.]

OBAA-SAN. Obaa-San—your mother—where is my pain? And you—who are you?

AOYAGI. I am Aoyagi, mother.

OBAA-SAN. You have not lost your way?

AOYAGI. I have but just found my way.

OBAA-SAN. My pain is stilled. There is no emptiness. It is a dream—a dream of spring and butterflies—Aoyagi!

[*She stretches out her arms and silently AOYAGI glides into them—as though they had always been waiting for her.*]

OBAA-SAN. I seem never to have known a time when you were not here.

AOYAGI. Oh, mother dear, it is now—and now is always, if we will.

OBAA-SAN. It seems as though the weeping willow tree had warmed and shown its heart to me.

AOYAGI. I am the Lady of the Weeping Willow tree!

OBAA-SAN. I care not who or what you are. You are here—close to my heart and I have waited always. I know I dream—I know.

AOYAGI. How long I've tried to speak to you!

OBAA-SAN. How long my heart has yearned for you!

AOYAGI. Mother!

[THE GAKI appears.]

THE GAKI. Such happiness. Already she has forgotten the coming of the man.

OBAA-SAN. Oh, how I've dreamed of you! When I was very, very young and had my little doll, I dreamed of you. I used to sing a lullaby and still I sing it in my heart:

See, baby, see
The ears of the wolf are long;
Sleep, baby, sleep,
Your father is brave and strong.

I grew into womanhood and still I dreamed of you. And, dreaming still, I grew old. And all the world it seemed to me, made sport of my longing and my loneliness. The people of the village called me grandmother. The children echoed the grownups' cry and ran from me. Now—Aoyagi—you are here. Oh, the warmth—the peace. Come let me gather flowers for the house. Let me—

AOYAGI. Oh, mother, dear. I am so happy here.

OBAA-SAN. [*Suddenly becoming the solicitous mother, she handles AOYAGI as one might handle a*

doll.] Are you—truly?—Are you warm?—You are hungry!

AOYAGI. No—I am just happy.

[*She nestles close to* OBAA-SAN. *There is complete contentment.*]

OBAA-SAN. I shall bring you—a surprise.

[*She darts into the house. Immediately* THE GAKI *comes in.*]

THE GAKI. You seem very happy, Aoyagi. And your mother is very happy, too.—And I am hungry now.

AOYAGI. You will not hurt her! Let me go back to the Weeping Willow Tree—

THE GAKI. That would kill her—perhaps.

AOYAGI. No—no—I should be near her then—always.

THE GAKI. But where would I have my food? Not in your heart, not in hers—I should starve and I must live.

AOYAGI. What then?

THE GAKI. See!

[*He points to the road. AOYAGI looks in that direction as* THE GAKI *disappears. RIKI comes in. Occasionally one may hear a bit of a lullaby sung in the old cracked voice of* OBAA-SAN :

*See, baby, see
The ears of the wolf are long;
Sleep, baby, sleep,
Your father is brave and strong.*

RIKI is a poet, young, free, romantic. He faces AOYAGI a little moment as though a wonderful dragonfly had poised above his reflection in a pool.]

RIKI. You are she!

AOYAGI. My—who—are—you?

RIKI. I am a poet—I have sought everywhere for you.

AOYAGI. I am the Lady of the Weeping Willow Tree!

RIKI. You are my love.

AOYAGI. I am the daughter of Obaa-San.

RIKI. I love you so!

AOYAGI. Yes—I love you so!—But I love Obaa-San, my mother—

RIKI. Come with me.

AOYAGI. But Obaa-San—

RIKI. Come with me.

Butterfly, butterfly, alight upon the Willow Tree

And if you rest not well, then fly home to me.

See! I make a little verse for you.

AOYAGI. But—Obaa-San—is very old and very lonely.

RIKI. She is your mother.—She must be glad to let you go.

AOYAGI. She does not know you.

RIKI. I know you.

AOYAGI. Yes—but I can not leave Obaa-San.

RIKI. We can not stay with Obaa-San.

AOYAGI. Can we not take her with us?

RIKI. No—like the Oshidori—we can go only by two and two along the silent stream—and as Oshidori in silence and in happiness float on and on and seem to cleave the mirrored sky that lies deep within the dark waters, so we must go, we two, just you and I, to some silent place where only you and I may be—and look and look until we see the thousand years of love in each other's hearts.

AOYAGI. Something speaks to me above the pity for poor Obaa-San.

RIKI. It is love.

AOYAGI. I love Obaa-San.

RIKI. This is love beyond love. This is earth and air—sea and sky.

AOYAGI. I do not even know your name.

RIKI. What does my name matter? I am I—you are you.

AOYAGI. I love Obaa-San, my mother.—I was happy in her arms;—I felt at peace;—but now I feel that I must go to you.—I am fearful—yet I must go.—You are—

RIKI. I am Riki. But what can Riki mean that already my eyes have not said.

AOYAGI. I feel a strange unrest—that is happiness.

RIKI. Come!

AOYAGI. First let me speak to Obaa-San.

RIKI. Look—out there—a mountain gleaming in the fresh spring air.—Amongst the trees I know a glade that waits for you and me.—A little stream comes plashing by and silver fishes leap from pool to pool—dazzling jewels in the leaf-broken sunlight. Tall bamboo trees planted deep in the father earth reach up to the sky.—And there the hand of some great god can reach down to us and feed our happiness—

AOYAGI. Riki—I must go—I feel the strong hand leading me—I feel the happy pain—I long—I would stay with Obaa-San; but, Riki, I must go.—Yon mountain gleaming in the sun—the bamboo trees—the silver fishes—you—

[OBAA-SAN comes in with a dish in her hand. She is radiant. Then—she sees the lovers—and she understands.]

OBAA-SAN. When do you go?

AOYAGI. Obaa-San, my mother—something outside of me calls and I must obey.

OBAA-SAN. I understand.—It must be wonderful, my little daughter.

AOYAGI. Mother!—This is Riki.

OBAA-SAN. Riki!—See that you bring her happiness.

RIKI. I could not fail. I have searched for her always.

OBAA-SAN. We always search for someone—we humans.—Sometimes we find—sometimes we wait always.

AOYAGI. Riki, I must not go. Obaa-San is my mother—and I am all she has.

OBAA-SAN. Yes, Aoyagi, you are all I have and that is why I can let you go. Be happy—

AOYAGI. But you, my mother.

OBAA-SAN. For my sake, be happy. Some day I shall be Obaa-San no more—and what of you then? Go, my little darling, go with Riki.—Some day, you will return.

RIKI. We shall return some day, Obaa-San.

AOYAGI. Farewell.

[*Very simply she steps into OBAA-SAN'S outstretched arms and then, as though they had been forever empty, OBAA-SAN stands gazing into space with her arms outstretched. AOYAGI and RIKI go out.*]

OBAA-SAN. Hai!—Hai!

[*She lays her hand upon her heart and, looking into space, turns to the house. There is the empty tree—her empty heart! THE GAKI comes in.*]

THE GAKI. Oi! Obaa-San!

[*OBAA-SAN turns mechanically.*]

OBAA-SAN. Did you not find your way?

THE GAKI. I found my way.—But why this unhappiness in your eyes?

OBAA-SAN. I am very lonely. I have lived my life-long dream of spring and butterflies a single instant—and it is gone.

[*She turns to go.*]

THE GAKI. I feed! I feed!

[*The voices of O-SODE and O-KATSU are heard calling*
OBAA-SAN.]

Here are your friends again.

[*O-SODE and O-KATSU come in.*]

O-SODE-SAN. Hai! Obaa-San, a little lady passed and told us you were lonely.

OBAA-SAN. I am lonely.—But I have always been lonely.

O-SODE-SAN. What has happened?

[*THE GAKI, hidden, has been triumphant. Suddenly he seems to shrivel as if drawn with rage.*]

OBAA-SAN. I waited, oh so long—you know.—I opened my arms.—My dream came true.—I sang my lullaby—to my child.—A lover came;—they have gone.

O-KATSU-SAN. She is a-wander in her mind.

OBAA-SAN. I opened my arms here—like this.—She stepped into them as though she had been there always—and now she has gone.—In one short moment I lived my mother-life.

O-SODE-SAN. It was magic! Come, Obaa-San, we'll make some prayers to burn.

O-KATSU-SAN. Some evil ghost.

OBAA-SAN. No! No! Some kindly spirit from the sky-dome came to me.—I have had one moment of happiness complete.—I have dreamed and I have known. Now I shall dream again—a greater dream—a greater dream.

[*The old women go into the house.*]

THE GAKI. What! I can not feed! My Lady of the Weeping Willow Tree is gone! Obaa-San has built a circle of happiness about her heart. Hai! I shall die in this shape.—I must feed.—Perhaps she tries to trick me.—I shall listen.—Why does she not weep?—Why do they not wail?

[*He starts for the house. As he nears it, the voice of OBAA-SAN is heard crooning the little lullaby:*

*See, baby, see
The ears of the wolf are long;
Sleep, baby, sleep,
Your father is brave and strong.*

THE GAKI, *defeated, seems beside himself. Suddenly he looks out and sees the mountain-peak.*

I'll find them in the bamboo glade. Perhaps I can make unhappiness there. Riki and Aoyagi!

[*The curtains close.*]

ACT II

A Bamboo Glade on the Mountain-side.

[*THE GAKI comes in.*]

THE GAKI. This is the glade on the mountain side—the glade where Aoyagi and Riki think to find their happiness. Here must I feed or I shall die in this shape.—Hai!—They come.

[*RIKI and AOYAGI enter.*]

RIKI. . . . And so like every other prince who is a real prince, he charged to the top of the hill before his men; and they, following him, fell upon the enemy and victory was theirs.

AOYAGI. And then—?

RIKI. And then the Princess laid her hand upon her heart.

AOYAGI. Is that all?

RIKI. Is that all? What more need there be?

AOYAGI. Did they not wed and have great happiness?

RIKI. You can answer that.

AOYAGI. I? I never heard the story before.

RIKI. One may always end a story—just right.

AOYAGI. Not a weeping willow tree?

RIKI. Even a weeping willow tree!

AOYAGI. How?

RIKI. I'll show you.—Stand right here.—So! I stand here.—Now look at me.

AOYAGI. I am looking.

RIKI. Place your hand upon your heart.

AOYAGI. Ay.

RIKI. Now I am the Prince. With sword in hand I come to you. From Kyushu to Koban I've fought my way to you;—through forest, marsh and mountain path I've striven for you. Now I am here.—Look at me.

AOYAGI. Ah!

[*With a cry of delight she rushes to his arms.*]

RIKI. And did they wed?

AOYAGI. Ah, love beyond love.

RIKI. And did they have great happiness?

AOYAGI. Ah!

[*She nestles close to him.*]

RIKI. My little princess! I did not come to you sword in hand; I did not fight my way from Kyushu to Koban. But I strove for you through forest, marsh and mountain pass.—Within me throbbed a mighty song that I could not sing. I saw almost all the world, it seems, and once I heard a voice that seemed to call to me alone. It was at the ferry of Ishiyama. I followed the sound—and there she stood all aglow in the morning sunlight. But when I saw, the song still throbbed within my heart and I could not sing to her.—Someone else called to me—"Hai! Hai! Hai!"

AOYAGI. And what of her—the vision at the ferry of Ishiyama?

RIKI. For all I know she may still be standing there in the morning sunlight all aglow.—I have found you!

AOYAGI. And was she—fair?

RIKI. Ay—how can I say? Now all the world is fair because I see only you in earth and sky and everything.

AOYAGI. She was aglow in the morning sun.

RIKI. How can I say? I heard her voice;—a song was in my heart—a song for you.—I saw her—the song staid locked in my heart for you.

AOYAGI. Riki—Riki—

RIKI. A dream that's true.

AOYAGI. I do not understand it all.—Obaa-San—you—this happiness.—I have known happiness, but not like this.—When I was in the weeping willow tree—sometimes I was happy and sometimes I was hurt.—Oh, Riki, Riki, this glade is like the weeping willow tree! Whenever the soft air sways the leaves, I feel the same sweet joy as when the little breezes played amongst my branches. The rain—oh, the gentle little rain that cooled me in the hot summer—the drops that danced from leaf to leaf and felt like smiles upon my face. Tears! The rain is not like tears, Riki.

RIKI. The dew is tears, perhaps.

AOYAGI. The dew! It came to me like a cool veil that the morning sun would lift and little breezes bear away. Then sometimes—the voice, the loneliness of Obaa-San.

RIKI. Look where her home lies. Far down there beyond that stream, see—there is Kyushu.

AOYAGI. Oh, Riki, my Riki, my august lord, why, why can I stay here in happiness with you when I know that Obaa-San is miserable and alone?

RIKI. I can not say? I only know that we are here

—you and I—and we are happy. Two make a world, Aoyagi. Why? How? I do not know.

AOYAGI. Can we not send a message to Obaa-San?

RIKI. Yes. I shall go down the mountain to the road and tell some passer-by.

AOYAGI. And I?

RIKI. Sit here and rest—and watch the silver stream at Kyushu.

AOYAGI. I shall wait.—I shall wait.

RIKI. Sayonara.

AOYAGI. Sayonara.—Sayonara, my august lord.

[RIKI goes out. AOYAGI, left alone, feels the air in the old way. She sways slightly in the breeze, then flutters toward the steps.]

Oh, Kyushu! The silver stream at Kyushu!

[She evidently sees the place where OBAA-SAN lives. Her eyes dim a bit and slowly she hums the old lullaby:

*See, baby, see,
The ears of the wolf are long;
Sleep, baby, sleep,
Thy father is brave and strong.]*

Poor Obaa-San!

[THE GAKI appears.]

THE GAKI. I have lost my way.

[AOYAGI turns quickly, questioning him almost fearfully with her eyes. There is something of the AOYAGI of the time when THE GAKI bade her leave OBAA-SAN.]

AOYAGI. Whither are you bound?

THE GAKI. I am a stranger bound for Kyushu.

AOYAGI. There is Kyushu. [She indicates the silver stream.]

THE GAKI. I am told there is a ferry on the way to Kyushu.

AOYAGI. Yes,—at Ishiyama.

THE GAKI. At—Ishiyama.

AOYAGI. Why do you speak so?

THE GAKI. I merely echoed your own words.

AOYAGI. I did not say them so terribly.

THE GAKI. What is in your heart came into your voice, perhaps.

AOYAGI. There is the way to Kyushu.

THE GAKI. Down that path?

AOYAGI. Yes. Did you not meet Riki?

THE GAKI. Riki?

AOYAGI. Yes, my august lord.

THE GAKI. I passed no one—except—a tall woman who was climbing slowly and singing a wonderful song—which I had heard once near the ferry at Ishiyama.

AOYAGI. But Riki just left me here. You must have passed him on the way.

THE GAKI. The by-paths are many and the trysting places are secret—like this.

AOYAGI. Riki would take no by-path. My august lord needs no trysting place save this.

THE GAKI. I do not know. I saw no Riki.

AOYAGI. My lord needs no trysting place. I am here. He knows I am here—waiting.

[THE GAKI *looks at her.*]

THE GAKI. Riki?

AOYAGI. He knows I am waiting—

THE GAKI. Riki?—Oh, yes the name—I heard it—once—at the ferry at Ishiyama. He has been there.

AOYAGI. Yes.

THE GAKI. A poet?

AOYAGI. Yes.

THE GAKI. He writes wonderful love-songs—they say.

AOYAGI. They?

THE GAKI. Yes,— the people at Ishiyama. I heard one.—It goes—let me see :

“Butterfly, butterfly, alight upon the willow tree—”

AOYAGI. He did not speak that at Ishiyama. He made that for me.

THE GAKI. I heard it, strange to say, at Ishiyama. Perhaps they brought it from—where did you say?

AOYAGI. He made that for me only yesterday.

THE GAKI. And I heard it—yesterday—at Ishiyama. There the wonderful woman was singing. [*She looks at him.*] The one I passed just now.

AOYAGI. That is a mistake.—You are wrong.—I know my—Ah! what is it here—that hurts me, tears me, seems to choke me! Riki!—I am all in all to him—he told me that.—He can not make poems for another.

THE GAKI. I should not have told anything.—Forgive me—I did not know.—To speak truth is deep in my heart.—I have no gracious subtleties.—I am sorry—

AOYAGI. In the valley there is a mist. I can no longer see the silver stream at Kyushu.—Who are you?—I am afraid!—Riki—Riki—

[*There is no answer.*]

THE GAKI. He does not seem to hear.—I shall go to meet him. He went this way, you say?

AOYAGI. Yes.—There is a mist in the valley and I can not see the silver stream at Kyushu—

[*She does not see THE GAKI who goes in the direction opposite to the one AOYAGI has indicated.*]

Oh, the little day—the little day—of love beyond love.—Riki—my mother, Obaa-San.—Yesterday the mountain-top gleamed like the topmost heaven in the spring sunlight. Today—the valley dies in mist and the mountain-top is lost in the sky.

RIKI [*coming in singing*]. Hai! Hai! Hai!

RIKI. Aoyagi!

AOYAGI. I must go back to Obaa-San, my mother.

RIKI. What has happened, Aoyagi?

AOYAGI. We came up the mountain path side by side, Riki. Without question I gave myself to you.

RIKI. Aoyagi!

AOYAGI. I gave my love—my love beyond love. I believed.

RIKI. Why not believe?

AOYAGI. Your first words were—"You are she!" I did not question. And now—

RIKI. Oh, my little love, was I gone too long?

AOYAGI. My love knows no time, Riki.—You were gone—how can I say?—ages.

RIKI. It was ages, too, to me, Aoyagi.

AOYAGI [*softening*]. I watched the silver stream at Kyushu—and I waited.

RIKI. What, are those tears?

AOYAGI. Nothing, Riki—but I feel so far away—from Obaa-San.

RIKI. She can bridge the distance with her heart. A mother can always bridge all distance with her heart.

AOYAGI. Hai!

RIKI. Our happiness is all she wants.

AOYAGI. Our happiness— [*bitterly*.]

RIKI. [*He goes to her. She moves away.*] Why—

AOYAGI. The silver fishes—

RIKI. What has happened, Aoyagi?

AOYAGI. Did you send the message to Obaa-San?

RIKI. Yes.

AOYAGI. Did you go down the path?

RIKI. Yes.

AOYAGI. Did you pass a stranger on the way?

RIKI. No.

AOYAGI. A stranger just came by.—He came up the mountain path.

RIKI. I crossed the stream.

AOYAGI [*She takes a deep breath.*] You crossed the stream.

RIKI. Aoyagi—little sweetheart—I cannot understand.—What do you mean?

AOYAGI. Oh, Riki, Riki, I am so alone. Tell me what—why—why—

RIKI. Aoyagi, was I gone too long? Has some demon come to you?

AOYAGI. No demon came. You were gone too long.

RIKI. I went down the path and crossed the stream to take a shorter way. I met a stranger—

AOYAGI. Singing?

RIKI. Yes—I think she was singing.

AOYAGI. *She* was singing.

RIKI. What do you mean, Aoyagi?

AOYAGI. Who was she?

RIKI. I do not know.—She said she would pass Ishiyama.

AOYAGI. Where did you see her?

RIKI. Beyond the stream—in a little glade.

AOYAGI. Did she sing your song?

RIKI. My song? No.

AOYAGI. Did she know your songs?

RIKI. Aoyagi! What do you want to know?

AOYAGI. Did she know your song to me—

“Butterfly, butterfly, alight upon the willow tree”?

RIKI. Perhaps.—I made that to you years ago—when you were a dream in my heart.

AOYAGI. At Ishiyama?

RIKI. Perhaps.

AOYAGI. Hai!—Obaa-San, my mother!—Oh, my heart—my heart—

RIKI. Aoyagi—what have I done? Let me comfort you!

[*He goes to her.*]

AOYAGI. You leave me nothing in all the world.

RIKI. I give you all my world.

AOYAGI. Hai! Hai! Hai!

RIKI. Let me go and call the lady bound for Ishiyama.

AOYAGI. Riki!—ah!

RIKI. Little Aoyagi—my love—she will be tender with you.—And when your tears are gone, she'll bear your message on to Obaa-San.

[*He goes to her, but she draws away. For a moment he is uncertain what to do;—then—he speaks.*]
I'll bring her back to you.

AOYAGI. Riki!—No!—We came up the mountain-path together—side by side.—We—but now, Riki, we go two ways.—I to Obaa-San—you to—

RIKI. What do you mean?

AOYAGI. Go sing your songs at Ishiyama! Go make your poems to the butterfly.—I—

RIKI. I have made songs only for you.

AOYAGI. But the songs for me are on every tongue.

RIKI. Ay—I am proud of that.

AOYAGI. The lady at the ferry at Ishiyama—

RIKI. She learned the song to you!

AOYAGI. Ah!

[*AOYAGI rushes upon him and before she realizes what she is doing, she strikes him. He stands petrified a moment, then faces her very calmly.*]

RIKI. I shall find the stranger-woman and send her to you.—I can no longer help you.

AOYAGI. You can no longer help.—Oh—life—oh, love—this too short day—

RIKI. I shall stay near at hand until you return to Obaa-San.

AOYAGI. I shall find the path alone.

RIKI. I'll send the stranger-woman to you.

[RIKI goes out.]

AOYAGI. Hai! Hai! Hai! I watched the sunrise only yesterday and I trembled with the wonder of the dew-cooled dawn. Life seemed all peace and—today—I have known a mother's love and my mother.—I have known a lover's touch—love beyond love.—I am waking from a dream. The Gaki said I'd waken—I'd be as free as one in life. Oh, what is this thing they call life? No happiness complete—a vision of a mountain top—a climbing to the goal—a bamboo glade—oh, the mist at Kyushu.—When I go back to Obaa-San—I shall love her so—but oh, the memory of Riki—the mountain gleaming in the sun—

[*She starts sadly from the path.* THE GAKI enters.]

THE GAKI. Lady, I am here again. It seemed to me that I must return to you. Something seemed to call. [AOYAGI almost collapses.] I feed! I feed!

AOYAGI. I can not go!

THE GAKI. You seem to suffer.

AOYAGI. Oh—I have lost my way in life—

THE GAKI. Lost your way in life? Let me help you.

AOYAGI. I have stood on the mountain side and I have seen the green valleys far below.

THE GAKI. Talk to me—as you would to yourself.—I hear but I shall not speak what I hear.

AOYAGI. Riki—no, I can not speak even to myself. Deep in me there is a hurt.—I can not tell—

THE GAKI. A woman gives all;—the man forgets.

AOYAGI. But to Riki—he knows—I brought him my full belief—my all-in-all.

THE GAKI. Your perfect faith.

AOYAGI. Ay, my perfect faith.—He spoke to me

and then I bowed to my august lord.—I followed him without question.—And he forgets so soon.

THE GAKI. Are you sure he has forgotten?

Aoyagi. You know—you saw the lady from Ishiyama.

THE GAKI. True.—I saw her.

Aoyagi. You did not meet him on the path.

THE GAKI. True.—I did not meet him on the path.

Aoyagi. He crossed the stream.

THE GAKI. Perhaps to shorten the way.

Aoyagi. He met her in a little glade.—Hai!

THE GAKI. What shall you do?

Aoyagi. I'll go my way.—I'll return to Obaa-San.

THE GAKI. I'll guide you down the mountain side.—Come, we'll take the shorter way—the by-paths—across the stream—through the little glade—

Aoyagi. [*She looks about once more at the scene of her happiness.*] Hai!

THE GAKI. Come!

Aoyagi. No, let us go down the path.—I want to see my footprints—side by side with his.

THE GAKI. Perhaps they're being crushed under the feet of the lady from Ishiyama!

[Aoyagi starts a moment as though to fly along the path before the lady comes.—She sways slowly—and then falls in a pitiful little heap.—THE GAKI takes her in his arms and, utterly triumphant, starts up the mountain-side.]

We'll go up—up—sweet Aoyagi, to the snow peak—gleaming in the sun.—You'll find the mountain-top—not lost in the sky.—Your perfect faith!—Oh, you silly human—oh, futile love—climb, Aoyagi—climb without love.—But first we'll make footprints for the lover's eyes.—Blindness will lead him to the mists at Kyushu.—Jealousy will lead you to the lonely stars. [*He holds Aoyagi so that her feet touch the ground—*

toward the downward path. Then with a wild laugh, he turns toward the mountain top. As the laughter dies, the voice of RIKI is heard calling Aoyagi! Aoyagi! . . . Oi!

The laugh of THE GAKI is heard once more very far away—as he ascends the mountain with his burden.]

RIKI. Aoyagi!—Aoyagi!

[RIKI comes running in. Presently he sees the foot-prints.]

Oi!—Aoyagi!

[He runs down the path.]

Aoyagi!—Aoyagi!

[Far, very far away THE GAKI's laugh is heard.]

RIKI. Aoyagi!—Aoyagi!

[Night has fallen slowly.]

Aoyagi!—Aoyagi!

[The curtains close.]

ACT III

Before the House of Obaa-San.

[It is moonlight. As the curtains open, OBAA-SAN is heard singing the lullaby; from the distance the voice of RIKI calls.]

RIKI. Aoyagi!—Aoyagi!—Aoyagi!—Aoyagi! Oi!

[OBAA-SAN appears in the doorway.]

Aoyagi!

OBAA-SAN. [She goes toward the voice.] Oi!

[RIKI enters.]

RIKI. Obaa-San! Where is Aoyagi?

OBAA-SAN. Where is Aoyagi?

RIKI. Is she not here?

OBAA-SAN. She is not here. Where—Riki!

RIKI. I left her in the bamboo glade—and when I returned she was gone. Her footprints pointed toward the path—and then were lost.

OBAA-SAN. Why did you leave her?

RIKI. I left her because she—I left her.

OBAA-SAN. I do not know, Riki, what has come to pass—but this I know—I am waiting for her.—I am waiting for her. Go seek for her—and bring her back to me.

RIKI. I shall search for her.—Obaa-San, she—

OBAA-SAN. I care not what she did. I am waiting here for her.

[RIKI looks at OBAA-SAN a moment and then understands.]

RIKI. Aoyagi!

[He goes out. OBAA-SAN turns to the empty house—the empty willow tree.]

OBAA-SAN. She will come back to me.

[She goes into the house. THE GAKI enters.]

THE GAKI. Foolish Riki! He searches in the valley. Mad Aoyagi! Alone with the lonely stars!—Oh, wondrous misery that makes itself.

[He sees OBAA-SAN. She enters from the house.]

Good-morning, Obaa-San, my friend.

OBAA-SAN. Good-morning, traveller.

THE GAKI. Why do you rise before the dawn?

OBAA-SAN. I could not rest.—Why are you not at Kyushu?

THE GAKI. There is a mist at Kyushu—and I feared to lose my way.

OBAA-SAN. Did you pass a little lady—Aoyagi, by name—alone—

THE GAKI. It seems—I met a little lady.—She was not happy.—That one?

OBAA-SAN. Where?

THE GAKI. I am a stranger here—I can not say.
Over there—or over there.

OBAA-SAN. She will come to me, perhaps.

THE GAKI. Do you know her?

OBAA-SAN. She is my daughter,—Aoyagi.

THE GAKI. Do you not fear for her?

OBAA-SAN. Perhaps.—She will be here soon.—Riki
has gone for her.

THE GAKI. She must know the way.

[*The voices of O-SODE and O-KATSU are heard*]
—This has been a restless night for age. [*He disappears. O-SODE-SAN and O-KATSU-SAN enter.*]

OBAA-SAN. Good-morning, O-Sode-San. Good-
morning, O-Katsu-San.—The lily hands of sleep have
passed you by.

O-KATSU-SAN. A strange unrest has seized upon
me. I think—and think of my little one. She is glori-
ous in my heart, and words with wings seem to flash
before my eyes like fireflies in the darkness.

O-SODE-SAN. I, too, have lived in words.

O-KATSU-SAN. Obaa-San, is it not wonderful to
put a joy or pain in words?

OBAA-SAN. Ah, yes—if there is anyone to hear
them. All my long, long years before Aoyagi came to
me, my heart sang, and words freighted with my
dreams and my love would come to me—here; and
they would die because they found no ear attuned to
them.—Tell me what you thought, O-Sode-San.

O-SODE-SAN.

The moon in calm restlessness

Shows the water grasses of the River of Heaven,

Swaying in the cool spring air—

I know the time to meet my lover

Is not too far away.

OBAA-SAN. Every one has a poem in his heart, I
believe.—What was your poem, O-Katsu?

O-KATSU-SAN.

Oh, messenger of the other world,
My little one is young;
She can not find her way—
Do you kindly take my little one
Upon your warm, broad back
Along the twilight path.

O-SODE-SAN. And you, Obaa-San—was it words that kept sleep from your eyes?

OBAA-SAN. Ay, bitter dream-words. And for the bitterness I am paying dearly.—Over and over the words came to me:

Here lies my daughter's sleeping body
On the mat beside me.
But her soul is far away
Asleep in her lover's arms—
And I, her white-haired mother,
Hold only an empty shell.

Oh, I am ashamed—ashamed.—And just now Riki came to me—and told me he could not find Aoyagi.

O-KATSU-SAN and O-SODE-SAN. Hai!

O-SODE-SAN. Can we not search for her?

OBAA-SAN. I am waiting here.—She may find her way back.—I would not have her come to an empty house.—Come—let's go within—and dream that yours and yours and mine are on their way to us.

[*The old women go into the house. There is just a moment's silence—then.*]

AOYAGI. Hai! Hai! Hai!

[AOYAGI, utterly forlorn, enters. She looks at the house, turns and sees the mountains, covers her eyes, and drags herself wearily to the willow tree. She moans as though winter had fallen upon the world and were taunting her. THE GAKI enters.]

THE GAKI. So you have found your way—in life.

Aoyagi. Oh, let me go back to my tree!

THE GAKI. No, little Aoyagi—you would be happy then.

Aoyagi. Let me die!

THE GAKI. One can not die.

Aoyagi. Hai!

THE GAKI. Where have you been?

Aoyagi. So far—so far!—I am weary.—When I awoke, I was on the mountain-top—alone.

THE GAKI. Were there no stars?

Aoyagi. Oh—the stars, the lonely, lonely stars! I tried to touch them—they seemed so near.—I found the path—the glade—our footprints—strange people—I am here. Let me back! Let me back!

THE GAKI. And what of Riki?

Aoyagi. He does not care.

THE GAKI. And what of Obaa-San?

Aoyagi. What can I give to Obaa-San now—but misery? Am I never to be free?

THE GAKI. What would you do if you were free—climb to the mountain top to see the lonely stars?

Aoyagi. Hai!—Riki!—Obaa-San!

[Obaa-San enters. THE GAKI disappears.]

Obaa-San. Was my name spoken in the dawn?

Aoyagi. Mother!

[With a cry of joy, Obaa-San folds Aoyagi in her arms.]

Obaa-San. Nadeshiko! My little girl!

Aoyagi. Where is Riki?

Obaa-San. He has gone to search for you.

Aoyagi. Was he alone?

Obaa-San. Alone?

Aoyagi. Yes. Was there no woman with him—a lady from Ishiyama?

OBAA-SAN. A lady from—

AOYAGI. Yes—tall—fair—singing—

OBAA-SAN. He was alone. A lady from Ishiyama—
[AOYAGI *shudders with dread.*] brought me a mes-
sage in the early night—

AOYAGI. It was she—young?

OBAA-SAN. No—old.

AOYAGI. Had she seen Riki?

OBAA-SAN. Yes. On the mountain-side—

AOYAGI. The stranger said she was young and fair.

OBAA-SAN. Perhaps the stranger did not see with
honest eyes.

AOYAGI. He would not lie.

OBAA-SAN. Sometimes the eyes and the ears lie.

AOYAGI. Ah!

OBAA-SAN. And if she had been young and fair?

AOYAGI. Riki met her in a glade.

OBAA-SAN. Did you see them meet?

AOYAGI. No—she was singing.

OBAA-SAN. A happy song, perhaps.

AOYAGI. She sang the song he made to me.

OBAA-SAN. How do you know?

AOYAGI. Riki said she knew his song to me.

OBAA-SAN. Ah, that is beautiful, that she should
love his song to you.

AOYAGI. He—

OBAA-SAN. My little darling, I do not know what
really happened; but this I know, you did not speak
fairly to Riki or Riki did not speak fairly to you. Al-
most every unhappiness comes because we speak too
much of our pride and speak too little of our hearts.

AOYAGI. I asked him if he saw her.

OBAA-SAN. Why?

AOYAGI. A stranger told me—

OBAA-SAN. Was it the stranger you believed be-
fore Riki could defend himself?

AOYAGI. But, mother, I gave my all in all to Riki. He does not care.

OBAA-SAN. Do you know?

AOYAGI. I asked Riki if they met?

OBAA-SAN. Did he tell you?

AOYAGI. He seemed to be proud to tell.

OBAA-SAN. Then he was unashamed to tell—

AOYAGI. I asked him questions.

OBAA-SAN. But did you ask him the great question in your heart?

AOYAGI. Oh—

OBAA-SAN. Did you say, “Riki, my love, you are in all my heart. Am I in all yours?”

AOYAGI. He told me that.

OBAA-SAN. And did you believe?

AOYAGI. Above all the world!

OBAA-SAN. Then why doubt him later?

AOYAGI. The lady from Ishiyama passed by.

OBAA-SAN. My child, a lady bound for Ishiyama passed by! Had she been singing all the love-songs of all the worlds; had she been fairer than the lotus-flower, why should you have doubted Riki?

AOYAGI. A stranger—

OBAA-SAN. A stranger!—a stranger!—Oh, why—why—why do the eyes of love grow blind because a stranger speaks? You, Aoyagi, did not see the lady bound for Ishiyama. You did not hear her song—and yet upon the ears and eyes of a stranger you would shatter your love.—I saw the lady.—She was singing.—She was not fair.—If she had been—Oh, my little child—Riki is Riki, your august lord, the lord of your life. When he comes back, go to him and speak from your heart.

AOYAGI. What shall I say?

OBAA-SAN. I need not tell your heart.—It is only

your head that can not learn to speak unprompted.—
Do you love Riki?

AOYAGI. Ay—so dearly!

[*The voice of RIKI is heard.*]

RIKI. Aoyagi!

AOYAGI. He is coming!

[*OBAA-SAN, unnoticed, goes into the house.*]

RIKI enters.]

RIKI. Aoyagi!

[*When he sees she is safe, he stops suddenly.*]

[*She goes to him.*]

AOYAGI. Riki, my august lord, listen to my heart.—
Forget my anger.—Tell me once again that you love
me.—I'll believe.

RIKI. You know—I have always loved you.—
When you were a song in my heart, I loved you so!
And now—

AOYAGI. Oh, Riki, can we ever forget the blow I
struck?

RIKI. That was yesterday—see, this is today: the
dawn has spread across the sky. What shall we do?
Look back upon the bitterness of yesterday, or try
to see the fears of tomorrow, or live in the gladness
of today?

AOYAGI. The Gaki of Kokoru is here at the tree.
He will not let us live in happiness. He let me go
with you because he meant to feed upon the misery
of poor Obaa-San.

RIKI. He has not come upon us yet. We are strug-
gling against tomorrow. This is the dawning of to-
day.

AOYAGI. Then shall we live—today.

[*OBAA-SAN enters from the house.*]

OBAA-SAN. Come, Aoyagi; come, Riki. We have
found happiness at our door. Within there are rice
and tea. Come.

[*They go into the house. THE GAKI enters.*]

THE GAKI. There is love!—Now what shall I do for misery? Old Obaa-San remembers happiness. She has taught O-Katsu and O-Sode to remember happiness. The lovers are reunited;—now they understand.—And I—I, ah, I must die in this dread shape and stay in this hell through all the eternities unless I bring new misery to them. What can I do? [*He turns to see the tree.*] Ah—I shall kill the tree—slowly—slowly—and I'll feed upon them all. Aoyagi is bound to the tree as one is bound to his body in a dream.—I'll kill the tree.

[*He draws his short sword and smites the tree. There is a cry from the house and AOYAGI enters quickly, followed by RIKI, OBAA-SAN, O-KATSU-SAN, and O-SODE-SAN. AOYAGI holds her heart.*]

RIKI. Aoyagi [*She droops in his arms. OBAA-SAN lays her hand upon her dear child's head. O-KATSU-SAN understands. THE GAKI in triumph smites again. AOYAGI cries out and shudders as she clings to RIKI.*] Oh, whatever power gave strength to me and led me to my love, give me the chance to save my love.

AOYAGI. The tree!—The tree!

[*THE GAKI smites again.*]

RIKI. The Gaki of Kokoru! Ay, I know! I know! I fight a fear, Obaa-San. Hold Aoyagi fast—with all your love.—I shall find the Gaki of Kokoru! [*THE GAKI smites the tree again and again, and at each stroke AOYAGI fails more and more until she finally crumples in a heap among the three old women.*] All strength! All faith to me! Into my hands give the power to break the bitterest hell asunder! Into my eyes put light that I may see the cowardly fears that infest our way.—Gaki! Gaki! where are you?—I

pass about you and in my heart I carry fearlessness and faith.—Upon your wickedness I hurl belief.—Ah, now, I see you.

THE GAKI. Let me go! Let me go!

RIKI. You shall bring misery into no more hearts!

THE GAKI. Ah, pity me! Let me go! I must feed or I shall die!

RIKI. You shall feed no more!

THE GAKI. Do not let me die in this sixth hell! Do not let me die! Once I was human—like you and you. I came into this hell because I was bitter in life.—I made misery for others.—I put mischief in their minds.—

RIKI. [*Leaping upon him.*] You shall make no more misery.

THE GAKI. Let me feed! Let me live! I can not die thus.

RIKI. [*Throttling him.*] Dread demon, the end has come!

THE GAKI. Please—please—hear me.

RIKI. Nay, you have made your last horror in our lives.

OBAA-SAN. Riki! Hear him—hear him.—We know not what we do, perhaps.

RIKI. Then speak.

THE GAKI. Let me go! Do you think it did not punish me to see your misery, to bring misery upon you. That is what these hells are. In life we can not always see what wretchedness we make; in the hells we see and know and understand, but we can not escape our evil until we've sucked the bitterness, the horror to the blackest end. Oh—five hells lie between me and human life. In each I may perchance forget the lesson learned before. Let me live! Let me live! —I can not fight your faith!—Let me live!

RIKI. What further harm will you do?

THE GAKI. I cannot help myself. I must live on you.—You are young—

[*He tears himself from RIKI and once more rushes to the tree. AOYAGI writhes a moment in agony. RIKI leaps upon THE GAKI, throttling him once more. The struggle is terrific.*]

RIKI. Die!

THE GAKI. Let me go! Let me live!—I promise anything—I—

RIKI. Too late!—You shall harm no more!

[*With one supreme effort, THE GAKI draws himself to his full height and seems about to crush RIKI. He leaps upon the prostrate AOYAGI and flings her body high above his head. RIKI starts for him.*]

THE GAKI. I shall live! I shall live!

RIKI. Aoyagi!

THE GAKI. Come not near me, Riki, or I shall crush her at your feet. I shall live!

[*He laughs the hideous laugh of triumph which rang out on the mountain side yesterday.*]

OBAA-SAN. Give her back to us! Feed on me!

THE GAKI. In your heart there is only hope and beautiful memory. Old fool, I can not feed on you.—But now in my arms I hold the precious gift by which I shall pass from hell to hell.

O-KATSU-SAN. Take me!

THE GAKI. Silly old woman, you, too, like Obaa-San, can not feed me. Age learns to grasp at bubbles and pretend that they are stars.

O-KATSU-SAN. But I shall dream of my little girl.

THE GAKI. Ay, dream of her and have tender memories that are not pain.

O-SODE-SAN. I shall think of him and long for him, my lover.

THE GAKI. Ay, and in the memory of the firefly

fête you'll make a poem that will leave you all melting-like and holy—then where shall I feed?

RIKI. Obaa-San, are you content? I'll let her die at my own hand before I'll let him live.

[*He draws his dagger and leaps toward THE GAKI; but old OBAA-SAN is too swift for him. She catches his hand.*]

OBAA-SAN. Riki! Would you kill the evil by killing the joy of us all?

RIKI. But the joy—my little Aoyagi—can not live so. See—

OBAA-SAN. O, Gaki of Kokoru—I stand before you, no longer a suppliant. I am old and in my years I have known all the wanting, all the hopelessness one can know in life. But in your evil way, you brought to me a moment of happiness yesterday and in that moment I saw the beauty that I had always believed must be and yet that I had never known. In your evil arms you hold the treasure of my life—you hold the songs that filled the heart of Riki. But you do not feed, oh, Gaki of Kokoru. You can not feed. Or, Gaki, what is this sixth hell of yours?—Who made it? Some man who was afraid of the joy of life;—it was too beautiful for his belief. Misery makes itself: so happiness makes itself. You stand before us, holding the darling of our dreams, but there is no misery so great as yours. See! I stand before you—unafraid—and in my heart lies happiness.—Aoyagi rested in my arms and my breast is warm and there is a glory where her dear head lay. In my life—if you take her from me—there will be an emptiness.—There will be long silences in the days to come; but my breast will still be warm with her touch and my ears will still hear the sweet words you cannot unsay—the lullaby I sang.—Oh, Gaki—it has been sung to her.—The climbing to the mountain

gleaming in the sun—the glade where love found the perfect mystery—that can not be undone whether we live or die.—Love that has been can never be undone.

[THE GAKI looks from one to the other, but finds only that splendid happiness that is almost pain. He loosens his hold upon AOYAGI and turns to RIKI with her.]

THE GAKI. She is yours!—I have met perfect faith.—Five hells lie before me—but I have met a perfect faith.—You cannot know what wonder I am knowing. From the sixth hell I have seen a perfect faith.—I am content to die in this shape. Strike, Riki!

RIKI. I have my love.

THE GAKI. But a peace has come upon me, a peace that I have never known.—I seem to be on wings—afloat in the sky.—Stars and suns swing gently by—and cool clouds brush my brow.—Five hells lie before me.—Can it be, in each I shall find peace like this?—[*He falls on his knees.*] Now a fire rages deep in me—a pain—I'm torn.—Oh, Obaa-San, I die—I die.—Come to me—touch me—let me feel your gentle hands.—So! So!—I have never known such gentleness.—Oh, I am cold—cold! Hold me—

[*He rises—sways—and falls. It is full day.*]

THE GAKI rises wonderfully.]

Obaa-San—I see—I see.—The hells were made by some man afraid of the joy of life.—It was too beautiful for his belief.—Riki—Aoyagi,—there is the mountain gleaming in the morning light.—Go—see your footprints side by side.—A Gaki's feet trod upon them, but left no mark—and they are there side by side.—O-Sode-San, I look across the River of Heaven;—there stands your lover waiting for you;—an empty boat is here to bear you to him.—

O-Katsu-San,—the messenger of the other world
bears your little one upon his broad, warm back.—
They are smiling, O-Katsu-San—Obaa-San—

*[He points to RIKI and AOYAGI. OBAA-SAN goes to
them and lays her hands upon them.]*

OBAA-SAN. My little girl!—my little boy!—Today
the sun is very bright.

[THE CURTAINS CLOSE.]

THE DRAMA, AN ART FOR DEMOCRACY



TWO speeches delivered in New York, the one by Mr. Winthrop Ames, and the other by Mr. E. H. Sothern, afford the opportunity and the material for stimulating thought and lively reflection upon current drama conditions, and the honor and fame which each has won in his respective field as manager and actor lends the weight of authority to each of their statements. There is added zest in their contrasting points of view.

In declaring that the average of stage plays today is not as high as it ought to be, the tenor of Mr. Ames's address is summed up in this bit of criticism: "If you want an intellectually aristocratic drama, you must have an intellectually aristocratic audience. Russia has the most advanced stage today, and in proportion to its population, Russia has the fewest theatres, and audiences almost exclusively drawn from the upper classes." Mr. Sothern speaks in this wise: "The theatre is essentially a democratic institution, and any theatre to succeed must appeal to what we call the common people because they are poor. It is this great middle class that knows and appreciates Shakespeare best, and Mrs. Sothern and I were always happiest when they were in our audiences."

Both men have labored long and well that the stage might fulfill its function as one of the fine arts. The sincerity of neither is to be doubted, yet apparently, when it comes to ways and means to promote the

stage as an institution worthy of the best that is in the human race, they stand as far apart as the poles. Where does the truth lie?

It is no mere figure of speech to say that the American stage has been experiencing an era of transition. The maturing of the American playwright and the lessened production of classic drama, the consequent passing of the old school of actors and the rise of a new, the shifting of emphasis from player to play, and finally the organization of the theatre into a vast business enterprise—all these things are the concrete evidence of a feverish state of flux and change. Have the basic principles been swept away?

There can be little doubt that the drama is the most popular of the arts. It is literally an activity of the people, by the people, and for the people. Basically, its primary appeal is to the emotions, and that dramatist who would succeed with the largest number of people should study the psychology of the crowd. Humanity in the mass demands simplicity of story and treatment. That was true when Aeschylus and Sophocles saw their plays performed in Athens, and there is nothing on the dramatic horizon today to cause any diminution of that truth.

But mere breadth of appeal does not bespeak either literary or dramatic worth in a play. It is the substance of that appeal which is the determining factor. Now with the increasing complexity of modern life, the stage, since it reflects humanity, has also grown diverse in its elements. Today the theatre embraces several distinct forms of entertainment, and within the domain of the legitimate drama there are seemingly numberless schools and cults. A common denominator may yet be found, though it is most certainly lacking today.

Would it be overstating the case to say that the

trend of late in the higher forms of the drama has been to increase the intellectual content at the expense of emotional gratification? The rise of the small, intimate theatres with special plays for selected audiences is indicative of the widening breach between the dissimilar forms of drama, so that today there is the theatre for the many and the theatre for the few. The "intellectuals" have their Ibsen and Shaw, their Galsworthy and Bennett, while the mass of the theatregoing population gives a vociferous welcome to musical comedy, to vaudeville, and the "movies." Then by way of contrast to both of these, there are times, as during the past season and in the days of the Sothorn-Marlowe Shakespearean productions, when the public will rally with surprising eagerness and sincerity to acclaim the classic drama.

But the fact remains that the advance in drama of late has been marked by Ibsen and the school of dramatists who trace their artistic ancestry back to the masterly but pessimistic Norwegian. The modern drama is marvelous in its psychological analysis, in its grasp of modern, sociological problems and the ills which attend the world, in everything in fact which can, for the lack of a better phrase, be called "brain matter." But its tragedies are almost invariably gloomy and depressing, its comedies filled with biting and acrimonious satire. There is truth in plenty, but it is the truth of the brutal iconoclast, probing, searching out the ills of humanity. Admirable criticism, perhaps, but the poetry of life is missing.

Is it not this same "poetry of life" which has made the dramatic giants of the ages living entities for all time, towering far above the technicians and critics of a single period? Sophocles, Euripides,

Shakespeare, Goethe, Schiller, Moliere—their dramas are not wanting in psychology, in thought or ideas, but they are supreme in their emotional sweep, in the universality of their appeal to human nature. They possess the substance to kindle the imagination of every age, because they have caught the grandeur of life; they have discovered beauty even in the sorrows of the world. "They have seen life clearly and they have seen it whole."

Who, among the dramatists of the present era, has been able to compass the poetry of life, and to express it with such delicacy and vibrant vitality in his plays that the latter will live to delight future ages? I should say that Barrie reveals it in *Peter Pan*, that it is contained in the beautiful philosophy of Thomas's *As a Man Thinks*, that it has found expression in Rostand's *L'Aiglon* and *Chantecler*, in Maeterlinck's *The Blue Bird*. This crowning quality of dramatic literature is frequently to be found in plays couched in poetic diction, because verse is the earliest form of literary expression in the drama, but as it concerns the content and not the form, the prose drama is not necessarily barred from consideration.

What part do the "movies" play in all this? With a large majority of the brainy men now writing for the theatre devoting more and more of their attention to the thesis drama, and to the expression of particular problems for particular people, the great, general theatregoing public has been left very much in the position of a shipwrecked man upon a raft in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. It has been thrown upon its own resources to work out its own salvation. Many of the older generation, finding little to their satisfaction in the new order of things, have ceased to go to the theatre. Others have afforded the sometimes amusing, sometimes pitiable spectacle

of trying to follow in the lead of the "intellectuals" and make a pretence of understanding and appreciating what the advanced drama is all about. Another portion of the public—and a very large part at that—has come to regard the stage as the rightful sphere of innocuous amusement. The final division of the public, and probably the largest of all, has taken to the "movies" with unaffected enthusiasm. This part of the public, often crude, and going to see a still cruder exhibition, at least possesses the qualities of genuine feeling and sincerity.

Now what are the pictures? They are dramas in the sense that they depict human life in such a way as to tell a story which shall interest a crowd of people. That they are exhibitions of struggling, wriggling humanity is too often true. In their frank appeal to the baser instincts, to the human love of physical encounter per se, they no more come within the domain of art than a gladiatorial combat, a cock fight, or a football game. But that they can on occasion fulfill the function of true art, some of the better motion picture producers have already proved. It nevertheless remains true that the "movies" all too frequently constitute a force for evil.

May not good eventually result from present evils? That course marks the progress of the world from earliest antiquity. Would Christianity have become the conserving, purifying force of civilization if it had not passed through the fire of persecution of intolerant Rome? An unjust system of taxation caused the American nation to spring into being. The "movies" have prospered because they have observed and recognized the primal forces in human existence. That they have made use of these same forces so as to debase rather than elevate humanity has been their besetting sin. But good or bad, they

have awakened a successful response from their audiences. Make no mistake in that.

The "movies," their mission and their future, have proved a veritable bone of contention between the adherents of the spoken and the silent drama, but the battle between the two is largely economic. However, contained in this struggle is a message for the spoken drama. The screen is successfully reasserting the basic principles which underly all dramatic art. From a purely economic point of view, the "movies" have won an assured position for themselves because they have (speaking for the general public) given equal if not greater value for less money than have the regular theatres. When it comes to crude entertainment, the pictures have the stage beaten at the start, for they can offer a proportionately greater amount of broad humor and real thrills for the price of admission. But many of the higher pleasures of the theatres—the things which give the stage a place among the fine arts—the sense of beauty satisfied by form and color, the spell woven by contact with the personalities of the living players, the music of the speaking voice, of rhythmic prose or cadenced verse, the sparkle of witty dialogue, the appeal to the imagination—all these are forever absent from the moving picture.

That the drama has stood through the centuries as the art of the masses, and that this is as true as ever it was is the message the "movies" bring. There is food for thought here for many dramatists throughout the world. If the leaders in dramatic thought and expression do not heed this cry and widen their horizon and broaden their appeal, the "movies" may prove a real menace to the drama. Leadership entails responsibility, and if the dramatic writers of the first rank do not put some of the beauty

and poetry of life into the drama, who is going to do it? If the public cannot find emotional gratification in the spoken drama, it will accept it in much cruder form in the "movies," and when it takes the form of the gratification of the senses in plays having to do with the underworld, and marital infidelity, the artistic tastes are soon blunted, and the public is not easily led back to a right appreciation of the finer things of which the art is capable. Of course, even here, it is doubtful if the ulterior effect could ever become permanent. The innate good in human nature eventually asserts itself, and satiety is reached, but not until considerable damage has been done. Such back eddies in the theatrical stream must perforce retard the forward development of dramatic art.

The motion picture is a great crude force which must be reckoned with. It is here to stay. We cannot kill it if we would; so let the legitimate drama profit by the good which it contains. The stage need not regard the screen as a foe if it will fulfill its own function properly. There are separate and distinct spheres for each. I have already stated what the screen cannot hope to attain. Conversely, the stage is not the medium for the display of broad, spectacular effects, or for stories demanding varied or diverse scenery, and extreme rapidity of movement. Such inherent differences make each practically invincible within its proper territory.

When venturesome beyond their natural limitations, disaster can and does occur, as recent history shows. Certain of the shrewdest men in the film industry tried to get the public to acknowledge the motion picture as a complete substitute for the legitimate stage and they failed. They failed be-

cause of the inherent difference which exists between the two mediums. After this trial of strength, each can develop along the lines most natural to its form of expression, for while constitutionally both belong to the field of drama, their technique already differs, and they are bound to diverge even more widely in the future. The motion picture has already claimed cheap melodrama and dramatic spectacle for its own, and as the stage is best fitted for the display of intensive drama, the development of extensive drama very rightly belongs to the screen. It has long been apparent that there is a type of story akin to the novel, having elements truly dramatic, which has almost invariably proved ineffective when put within the contracted limits of the stage. Here is an unlimited field for the "movies" to draw upon. With men of ideals and artistic sensibility at the helm, the motion picture industry can become the motion picture art—and the true ally of the spoken drama.

So it is that while our leading dramatists have been very busy creating a drama for the few, the "movies" have been building a drama for democracy. Do not consider this arraignment of the intimate school of drama as a plea for its abolition. Nothing of the sort. While drama is unquestionably—in its larger aspect—the art of the many, that does not preclude the production of plays for the few. The new school of playwrights has performed a very real service in its way. It is only because it has missed an opportunity to create a fine art for the many that I condemn it. When Winthrop Ames says that you can't have an aristocratic drama until you have aristocratic audiences, he is quite right; but did Shakespeare and the other epoch-making dramatists write aristocratic drama? Their plays

are as broad as the humanity for which they wrote. They are in every sense of the word popular dramatists. That they do not always awaken an immediate response in this day and generation has nothing to do with the facts in the case. If they had not been universal in their appeal they would not have lived. That, today, the public is not always given a chance to make their acquaintance, and that when they are produced they are not always completely performed, is true; that the conditions of modern life (of which I shall speak shortly) are partly at fault, and that the stark, photographic realism of the "movies" has served to debase the public of the immediate present is still truer; but do not call them aristocratic authors needful of persons of the same ilk to appreciate them.

I revert for the moment to Mr. Ames and his analysis of the present situation. Upon what does he base his belief in the need of aristocratic audiences? He frankly states that the bulk of the theatregoing population in America is crude in its capacity for intellectual appreciation, and he finds the causes for this condition in this: that America is a democracy having compulsory, free education, that it has enjoyed unexampled material prosperity of late years, and that the labor interests have succeeded in securing a large part of this wealth for the improvement of the condition of the working people. The result, he says, is a public big and eager for the pleasures of the theatre, but lacking in discrimination.

It has long been a mooted question as to what force is responsible for conditions existing within the theatrical world. Some have blamed the managers, some have blamed the public, and now we have Winthrop Ames, who says that it is useless to blame

either one or the other, that these conditions are the natural outcome of the working of a great primal force—Democracy. That seems to come pretty near the truth. There are too many single forces working at cross purposes to blame any one of them.

But how are we to set at rest the difference of opinion between his plea for intellectually aristocratic audiences and Mr. Sothorn's assurances that it is the common people who prove the surest support for Shakespeare? As we have considered the various forces at work among the producers, so let us now turn our attention to the consumers of drama—the audiences. I have previously pointed out that the "public" is not a single entity. It is rather a series of publics, each having its own tastes, so that there is the limited public of Ibsen, the larger public of Shakespeare and classical drama, the "movie" public and so on. The same forces which have split the writers of plays into groups have acted upon the audiences.

It is unquestionably true, as Mr. Ames states, that there is a great part of the newer public which is eager but childlike in its tastes. America has bitten off a larger part of Europe's peasant population than it could easily digest. The lower strata of American born has risen sharply in the social scale. The "movies" and cheap vaudeville have prospered with their aid because they have been most nearly within their reach financially. Before their artistic perceptions have been dulled by brash theatrical fare, however, is it not true that they are to be found in the audiences of Shakespeare and the better plays when exorbitant prices of admission are not demanded? We have the word of E. H. Sothorn that the common people will support Shakespeare when given the chance.

What of the so-called upper classes? Are they capable of furnishing an intellectual aristocracy which will serve as a firm foundation for the best that the drama has to offer? The men and women of wealth and social position are endowed with some education and much sophistication. As for sophisticated society standing as the bulwark of intellectual drama, question some of its members and see for yourself. They enjoy the sophistry of the brilliant Bernard Shaw and the paradoxes of Oscar Wilde, and they can edure the froth of light society comedy—their own metier. But Shakespeare? “Never,” they exclaim. Have they made Ibsen and Brieux popular dramatists in America? As for those two ancient Greeks, Euripides and Sophocles—I doubt if some ever heard of the gentlemen. The veneer of modern social life has robbed the upper classes of real enthusiasm for dramatic art. Superficial thought and feeling have destroyed absolutely their capacity to sense the warm glow of the imagination. Supercilious interest and blasé indifference can kill nobility in art far quicker than any amount of crude taste. Let the drama pray to be speedily delivered from any such intellectual aristocracy as this.

Can you create an intellectual aristocracy out of the great American theatregoing public? The lower and middle classes may be childlike and eager in their tastes, but the upper classes are certainly childlike and satiated. Mr. Ames by his own statement admits that the lower strata in American society is being put through the mill of the public school. Can it then be said that the American public is lacking in education? If it is in possession of a fair degree of schooled intelligence, is it possible to create an intellectual aristocracy above and beyond what already exists? Must not a great popular art like that of

the drama always rest its case with the public at large? There may be plays with a limited appeal which will find their own clientele, but are not the truly great dramas of all time what they are because they are as broad as humanity itself and as clear as crystal to the uninitiated? Shakespeare, though not a man of profound learning himself, is reckoned as the greatest of dramatists in the English language. Did Shakespeare rely upon an intellectual aristocracy for his public?

There undoubtedly exist plays which can be appreciated only by the scholar, the intellectual aristocrat of whom Mr. Ames speaks, but they are not great as drama, but as literature. The heritage of dramatic literature which has come down to us would not be concerned with the playhouse, if it did not contain works which were primarily great as drama. The surest and strongest bulwark of great drama is the great general public, normal in mind and heart when it is unspoiled by cheap sensationalism. Recognition does not always come at once, but was there ever a great drama written which was not eventually discovered and acclaimed by that same public? The scholar will know why the drama is great, but the public will none the less instinctively feel it is great.

I cannot agree with Mr. Ames in his theory of an intellectual aristocracy for the drama, but I believe that he treads solid ground in attributing present conditions to the working out of democracy. If there is any true cause to believe that the finer instincts of American audiences for higher intellectual appreciation and emotional gratification are temporarily in abeyance, it is to be attributed to the temper of modern life.

The American democracy upholds the right of

every individual to better his condition, and in this materialistic era that means money making. It would seem as if there were few Americans who had not taken advantage of this to the full. The dazzling schemes of finance have so immersed the American populace in its own problems that there has been little time to give to art. The spirit of the times has developed a nation of business men, shrewd and keen, quick to grasp the material needs of the country, imaginative enough to satisfy its wants. But the rush and hurry of the struggle for existence has not permitted these same men—and women, for that matter—to think deeply or feel sincerely enough to sharpen its artistic perceptions to a like degree. It has not been the inclination which has been wanting so much as time. The dying out of the older generation of which Edwin Booth was the conspicuous leader left the American stage with the task of building anew. The spirit of hustle had permeated actors, and dramatists, and managers alike, and when the new generation had reached its maturity, it was found that it had not fostered art, but popular amusement.

Present conditions are what they are, and there is little good in railing at the forces which have brought them about. Percy MacKaye long ago pointed out to the American nation the problem which lay before it of organizing the forces of its leisure. America must develop a true leisure class, not a group coated with the veneer of sophistication, but one fresh and alive with enthusiasm for the drama, and the time to devote to its right development.

That does not mean giving the drama into the hands of the wealthy. Quite the opposite. For the better class of drama has been in the hands of

wealthy but often indiscriminate people for some time past. The exorbitant prices charged by Broadway theatres and playhouses of the first class throughout the country generally has been the means of placing a premium upon the tastes of these same rich men and women. There is an intelligent public today, and it is often excluded from the support of the drama for economic reasons alone. The intelligent public has grown, but its pocketbooks have not always fattened as have those of the indiscriminate and indifferent men and women of wealth. The American stage has adopted the very undemocratic policy of exclusion, and it is reaping the consequences.

What was the ill-fated New Theatre but an exclusive experiment? It was also an experiment revealing idealism, but it was the idealism of an exclusive group, and it failed because it smacked too much of charity to enlist the whole-hearted enthusiasm of the general public in its support. The art of the drama has its roots too firmly entrenched in democracy to become the appendage of wealth and social position.

Does not the success of the Washington Square Players tend to substantiate the soundness of this contention? The New Theatre was the instance of trying to superimpose a ready made art upon a public having no vital concern or interest in its welfare. If the New Theatre was a failure in the attempt to work from the top down, the little group at the Bandbox has just as surely won success because it has built from the ground up. This little organization has been a genuine growth with its roots fixed in no one strata of society. From the first these actors, artists, litterateurs, and playwrights have been animated with but one guiding

principle, the democratic spirit of coöperation. There lies the secret of their strength. It has marked their activities within their organization as well as characterized their attitude towards their audiences. They thought they had discovered a want of the drama-loving public, and they set themselves the task of trying to satisfy it. The attempt justified the effort, and now they fill a distinct niche in the artistic life of the metropolis.

Then there is the case of Miss Grace George. This actress thought the public desired a theatre having a permanent company for the presentation of high comedy approximating to a certain, definite standard in which cleanliness and humor would be conspicuous. She put her beliefs to the test and she found that she was right. The actress-manager has established a playhouse with a standard, an atmosphere, and a clientele all its own. Repertory was also one of her announced aims. Her season was marked by fairly long runs, but this she was forced to do as all her productions were new, and it takes time to establish a repertory with an assured appeal. Worthy of special notice is the fact that Miss George tried to obtain as wide a public as possible by lowering the admission charges to a minimum compatible with assured financial success. A larger theatre would have made even greater reductions possible.

That the element of participation (which Percy MacKaye has often advocated) is provocative of beneficial results was demonstrated very concretely in the celebration of the Shakespeare Tercentenary. This artistic event served to rouse the public to a consciousness of its responsibilities towards the drama as nothing else has done in recent years. The public is always capable of the highest intellectual and emotional appreciation when shocked into ac-

tion. That potential force never dies, but it often falls into a very deep slumber. The ambitions of schools and colleges, of acting clubs and drama societies, of every conceivable kind of organization in fact, to do honor to Shakespeare awakened the spirit of idealism in the public. In consequence, through the momentum of their own labors, the spark of bored veneration which has characterized the public of late years was fanned into something very like the flame of real enthusiasm. Shakespearean productions prospered very genuinely during the season of 1915-1916. But it remained for the great community masque, *Caliban*, to bring the new temper into widest popular recognition. Who among the two hundred thousand people who attended the great Shakespeare masque failed to be thrilled by the unlooked-for triumph of this attempt to pay homage to the Bard of Avon? In a larger sense, the victory won by Shakespeare was a victory for the whole art of drama. There is evidence of permanence in the accomplishments of the Shakespeare Tercentenary in the founding of the Community Drama Association and its avowed purpose to keep alive the community spirit through the channels of the drama, and also in the movement afoot to establish a repertory theatre for the presentation of Shakespeare and classic dramas backed not by a single class, but by a truly representative organization innocent of sects and creeds. An aroused civic consciousness should hasten the rehabilitation of the drama as the art of democracy.

CHESTER T. CALDER.

THE THEATRE DU VIEUX-COLOMBIER

The Theatre Du Vieux-Colombier, situated on the left bank of the Seine, in an old street to which it owes its name, was inaugurated in Paris, October, 1913.

This inauguration was the result of a carefully thought out project which had known many disappointments—met with many obstacles. It was realized at last, thanks to the perseverance and the self-denial of a small group of artists, who had become brothers in arms through their intellectual understanding and mutual love of action. Nothing new is undertaken without a certain amount of opposition. We became accustomed to the murmur of discouraging voices. People of the profession, to whom life had left nothing but their sterile experience, warned us sarcastically. We also heard the pessimistic premonitions of the timid and the sceptical; the advice of the self-satisfied, inclined to extol the merit of the entertainments in which they delighted; the remonstrances of friends, sincerely moved to see us subject our peace of mind to this thankless task, and risk all our strength in the pursuit of a phantom.

But words cannot influence him who has resolutely sacrificed his life to an idea which he intends to serve. Happily, we had reached manhood without having known despair. We confronted the existing conditions, which we abhorred, with a craving, an aspiration, a will. To assist us, we had this phantom we bore within us, the illusion which imparts courage and joy to all efforts.

Were we to designate more clearly the feeling which stimulated our strength and the passion by which we were urged, driven, until we were obliged to yield, then we must say this feeling was indignation. Day by day an ungovernable commercialism cynically degraded our stage, thus turning away people of culture. Theatres were monopolized by a handful of entertainers in the pay of shameless merchants—everywhere the same spirit of “cabotinage” and of speculation; everywhere, bluff; competition of every kind; display of every nature; parasites living on an art which was dying and for which there was no longer a thought; everywhere impotency, lack of discipline, ignorance and silliness, scorn of the creator, hatred of beauty; production growing more foolish and vain; more and more lenient critics; and the public taste further and further misled.

This indignation others have felt; others have given it expression; but among the indulgent, many have gradually withdrawn their anger. Either diffidence closed their mouths, or they were corrupted by “camaraderie,” or fatigue caused the pen to fall from their hands. New complaints were heard; fresh protestations still arose. But does it suffice to protest? Is it enough to fight for a lost cause with useless and embittered criticism? Or again to intrench behind an egotistical contempt? We have no use for a passive dissatisfaction. While the best are content to state their preference or their displeasure, to keep their personal taste above the general corruption, the evil is spreading; and shortly we shall not even have standing room in the realm of our art, in this territory which is ours by right.

We do not think it sufficient today to create powerful plays. Where would they be welcome? Where could they simultaneously find a public, interpreters,

and an atmosphere favorable to their development?

As a matter of course, like a perpetual petition, we faced this great problem, to build a new theatre on an absolutely inviolate foundation, which should be the meeting place of all authors, actors, spectators, who are tormented by the desire to restore beauty to the stage.

In the last twenty years, we have seen a few with real talent turn to the stage. We have seen some of them, probably unwittingly, imperceptibly acquire and hold that complacency which early success gives to an easy soul; by their exploited and deformed gifts, they grasped the hollow prestige which impresses the masses. We have seen others whose firmness of character was a protection, and whose respect for their art was cause for them to desert a stage which would have welcomed them only to corrupt them. Their ardor slackened; their inspiration was broken. To be silent or to abdicate were the alternatives.

Our condemnation of the modern stage is that it handicaps the artist's power; and the aversion and disgust which he feels is what leads to the deterioration of the theatre today, and causes it to be called justly "the lowest of all arts."

Our purpose in creating *The Vieux-Colombier* was to try to give back brilliancy and grandeur to this art. In the place of genius, we brought to this work a resolute ardor, a concentrated force, disinterestedness, patience, method, intelligence and culture: the love and the need of what is well done. From whom could one expect such effort if not from those whose very lives depended upon it? One could certainly not expect it from the commercial, the amateur, the vain-glorious—but from workers in their art, accustomed to labor, creating with their hands and their brain,

preparing material which may be joined together by an ingenious device, thereby laying the foundation which leads to the realization.

In this spirit the Theatre du Vieux-Colombier was born, a sincere and powerful spirit, a spirit of love and austerity. From the beginning, it swept before it all obstacles which might hinder its expansion. This spirit set aside the pretension of the actor as an actor, leaving him only one duty—humbly and faithfully to serve his art. It rejected as a whole all superfluous “mechanism” ancient and modern. The spirit of the drama alone should reign on the free stage. Be it said, we were firmly convinced that it is disastrous for dramatic art to be surrounded by a great many exterior contrivances which enervate and diffuse its power. They encourage artifice, the picturesque, and sink the drama into a fairy tale. Let us be careful not to loosen our hold. The Greek stage and that of Shakespeare were absolutely free, because they were instruments of the mind, because they responded to the inward demand of the drama and were governed by its law. Their conventionality was the result of perfect form. We must not mistake scenic form for dramatic form. To destroy the first is not to liberate the second. On the contrary, the rules of the stage and its rudimentary craft will discipline us, compelling us to concentrate on the truthful rendering of the sentiments and the actions of the characters we impersonate, on the logic of the action, on the measure of passion, on the play of the actor. Let all other prestige be done away with, and leave us the bare boards.

The Theatre du Vieux-Colombier existed only eight months, from October 22, 1913, to May 30, 1914. At first people smiled at its audacity. Then they bowed to its spirit, and finally they hailed its realiza-

tion. In eight months it had created a varied repertory and established these two magnetic poles of the theatre—a community of interpreters answering the demand of a community of spectators. In May, 1914, at its annual closing, the Vieux-Colombier was known not only all over Paris, but all over France, and nearly all over Europe. It had succeeded in remaining absolutely pure by the sole virtue of its work. Its success was not a question of fashion or a matter of snobbism. It was a positive and lasting victory, a first step towards a great future.

May I be permitted to affirm here that the war, though it closed the doors of our theatre, forbidding it all activity for three years, has not broken its spirit. On the contrary, it has strengthened it. The community was dispersed. Several of the young artists have fallen before the enemy. Those who survive in the trenches are thinking of the Vieux-Colombier—they speak of it with a fidelity, an ardor, a faith, which, when I have read their letters, more than once has brought tears to my eyes. And among the public—I have many proofs—lives the same memory, the same confidence in our future. This condition of mind, victorious under the darkest trials, surpasses in moment any other result. It is the very essence of the Vieux-Colombier. It is on this condition of mind that I have always placed my faith.

Now a recompense is promised, as for a time the Vieux-Colombier is going to find in America a second mother-land. It has this season the honor of presenting French art to the eyes of the American artists and public. I wish this public, these artists, to know with what respect, with what friendship, the Theatre du Vieux-Colombier comes before them, above all with what fervor. Fervor is the essential gift; it is the gift of one's self. There are without

doubt in France many actors better known or simply more skilled than those of the Vieux-Colombier. There are none more sincere. I see them bounding on the stage with cries of joy, the stage which for three years has not trembled beneath their feet. I see them coming from afar, in a hurried rush to tread the boards, as Craig one day described Hamlet's comedians—"like birds in a storm of feathers." They have youth and this divine gift, this promise of life, a spirit, which enlivens them. Drama, comedy, tragedy, farce and pantomime—they are ready to wear every garment of fiction, simply, readily, from love and from pleasure. The poet's dream is the very matter of which they are made. They live only for their art, and with eyes fixed on the master, they obey his slightest signal.

Don't ask us what are our principles. Today a great man is made of two or three principles, christened by a scientific name, which he pins on his hat. . . . For us there is talent, instinct, and taste. There is study and professional conscience. There is the knowledge of the instrument we use and of the matter upon which it plays. There is discovery and invention, this marvelous science of the artist always subservient to nature, always drunk with imagination, never stable, but enriched and renewed by the labor of each day, attentive to every incident, inspired by fire and emotion.

That which we follow is life in all its movements, in every one of its forms. It is the simplicity of life. That which we hate is the academic, the cold intellectuality, everything that is pedantic and every sort of pedantry, the critic from principle, the author with pretensions, the actor with mannerisms. Between foolish frivolity and intense æstheticism there is room for this beautiful and natural method, simple

and at the same time supple and severe, alive to the real and gifted with phantasy.

“At the Vieux-Colombier,” said André Suarès, “a lie is held an abomination, whether in the choice or presentment of a play, in the diction or the characters. False genius, false taste, false diction, and false coloring—these are the enemies which the Vieux-Colombier intends to destroy.”

The style of France is a style which knows no lie!

JACQUES COPEAU.

A NEW MOVE IN MUSIC DRAMA



ALTHOUGH it is not yet as widely known in the country in which it takes place as it deserves to be, the Glastonbury, England, Music-Drama Festival is of sufficiently striking character to have aroused interest among those who watch musical and theatrical doings in all parts of the world. Impressed deeply with the personality of its founder and director, it is by no means a "one-man show," but is thoroughly catholic in its aims and progressive in its methods. Like Bayreuth, with which it is most frequently compared, it is national in the respect that its chief aim is to encourage and assist the development of a national art. Unlike that center, it is thoroughly eclectic in the choice of its programs, and aims not at the perfect performance of one man's works so much as at the founding and encouragement of a school of British writers for the stage, musical and otherwise, and the creation and development among the common people of a love and appreciation for these classes of work.

Its history is not without interest. Rutland Boughton, who started it and still continues, so far as military duties will allow him, to direct its operations, is one of those musicians who have a strong feeling that every country, and especially a country such as England, which possesses so great a wealth of legend, should have its own opera or music-drama. In this view and in his methods of bringing it about,

he is supported by a number of musicians and amateurs as well as by dramatists, critics, and writers such as George Bernard Shaw, Edward Carpenter, Robin Legge, Ernest Newman and St. Loe Strachey. Perhaps because Boughton is first of all a musician and a musical composer, it is chiefly in musical circles that the festival has attracted attention. This is somewhat regrettable, because the experiments in play construction and in staging are of a highly interesting and progressive character.

The idea originated some fifteen years ago in the minds of Boughton and of Reginald R. Buckley, a young poet and journalist with high dramatic aspirations, who were then quite unaware of the existence of each other, but who have since become collaborators in a great cycle of music-drama. Buckley had an idea for a Temple of Art, part of which should be a theatre, the actors being members of a commune working on the land for a part of their time and preparing for and performing national and other plays, both dramas and operas, as recreation and artistic exercise. Boughton had some similar ideas, but, because he was a musical composer, he referred all these ideas to music. As he gained experience and became wider read, Buckley developed his idea, but always kept his main principle before him, coupled with that of a national drama based on national legends. The result was that he slowly worked out a scheme for a grand tetralogy of dramas on stories of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. This series of dramas is now published under the collective title of *Arthur of Britain*, and it also forms the basis of the music-drama cycle for which he is jointly responsible with Boughton.

The scheme of this he showed to Mr. Charles Manners, who had then recently started his touring opera

company. Mr. Manners did not dislike the idea, but thought the scheme too big for opera and suggested a publisher rather a composer. Buckley still thought otherwise, however, and submitted the work first to Sir Edward Elgar and later to Prof. Granville Bantock. These two also liked the idea, but expressed inability to deal with it, Bantock, however, taking sufficient interest to suggest that Boughton should be asked to take it up. The result was that author and composer were drawn together and discovered that they had much in common in their ideas as well as their methods, and by slow degrees the first of the British Music-Drama Festivals, as they are now called, evolved.

Before settling down at Glastonbury, which from the romantic point of view (the only one he was capable of taking) was the only place at all appropriate for such an institution, Boughton experimented at several holiday schools and among his friends and pupils. These experiments were with the musical details of his work rather than with the general principle, although at one holiday school at Bourne-mouth, which he conducted himself, some definite experiments in the actual stage production of the first of the four dramas, *The Birth of Arthur*, were made. Chief of these was that of his invention of "human staging" or "living scenery." He started work at Glastonbury in 1914 with a handful of pupils and friends and a guarantee fund of something less than one thousand pounds. The rest of the large amount necessary for carrying out the scheme he hopes to raise from the large and small contributions of those whose interest is aroused by early festivals and from the earnings of the attached school, and subsequently from profit on the performances. So far the monetary results have not been sufficient to

pay expenses. But neither Boughton nor his supporters, an increasingly large body, are discouraged.

Until the theatre, which it is proposed shall be erected, is finished, the performances are given in one or other of the schools or halls of the neighborhood. As not one of these is itself larger than a small stage, the actual stage room is, to put the matter mildly, "very restricted," restricted not only in size, but also in accommodation in the way of flies, places of ingress and egress, dressing rooms, and all the many necessities of the modern theatre. This has not been without its advantages, for it has thrown the promoters upon their natural resources, which is always an excellent thing for pioneers and innovators and is a useful experience for all actors.

The first modification of methods brought about by this restriction of course was in the matter of scenery. In this matter it was fortunate that so wise as well as so able an artist as Christina Walshe was available to supervise as well as to design and paint the scenes. Tradition and precedent were flung to the winds, though Gordon Craig and even Granville Barker and Max Reinhardt and quite possibly also Léon Bakst have not been without influence. The simplicity of the designs would suggest that the first of these influences is the strongest, were it not that the individuality of the productions is so strongly marked. We sometimes speak of a triumph over space; but to the stage artist the triumph over lack of space is a greater one. And Christina Walshe has achieved it in a marked degree. She has also triumphed over tradition in other ways, for the dresses not only are some of the most effective on the stage today, but are also some of the cheapest. Most of them are made by the ladies of the company, who, professional or amateur, have entered into the spirit

of the thing enthusiastically. Some of the men have also a share in this. No one would be allowed, even if he wished (which he does not) to be merely an actor or a singer; some of those who do most are artists known the world over for their ability and success.

The greatest triumph of all has been in the management and use of the chorus in both its scenic and its musical functions. As to the latter something will be said in referring to the novel form of the libretti of Boughton's own compositions. "Human staging," in which, as will readily be seen, the chorus plays an important part, came first as the result of efforts to do away with the "stand-in-a-semicircle" methods of conventional opera, and later as a means of overcoming the difficulty of limited stage space and the lack of scenery and stage mechanism. Roughly it is a development of the universal practice of placing the characters, whether individually or in groups, "in the picture," of letting their dress, their poses and their actions have a definite relation to the fixed scenery. Boughton has gone further by giving movement to the actual scenes by this method. For instance, in a scene representing the crossing of a ferry no attempt is made to move the boat, of which only a portion is seen. Instead, the chorus, placed against a neutral tinted backcloth without tracery, by slow movement in an unbroken chain, the limbs being moved in a graceful motion suggestive of waves, makes a strong appeal to the senses as well as to the imagination. The only flaw is the fixed appearance when the chorus is stationary before the motion of the boat begins and after it has ceased. A very different water scene is that in *The Round Table*, the second of the Arthurian dramas, in which The Lady of the Lake has a not

unimportant part, but in which she and her maidens themselves, by means of veils, represent the moving, but not flowing, water. The optical illusion in both these, and in other cases, is remarkably complete.

One reason, probably the great reason, for the success of this system is that it fits in with the general scheme of the staging and action, while its technic is not too obvious; it does not cause immediate wonder which would evaporate with further acquaintance.

It is only possible by these instances to give a very rough idea of the system, but once its principles are grasped its potentialities seem to be well-nigh unlimited.

In the singing of the chorus, especially in *Arthur of Britain*, the aim has been first to express mass-feeling, and secondly to create an emotional and descriptive texture after the manner of that created by the orchestra in Wagner's later works, but with the addition of words to help towards definiteness. In the poem Buckley has developed the latter idea by giving to the chorus frequent recurring phrases, which may be regarded as literary guiding motives. They appear sometimes in the dialogue also, or in the songs (of which there are few) and sometimes in choral numbers in which the singers are heard but not seen. In the design for the theatre a special place for such a chorus is provided, the invisible (or orchestral) chorus being supplemented only occasionally by a chorus on the stage.

Present conditions hardly allow of the practicability and effectiveness of this method's being tested, for the choral orchestra has, perforce, to be in the wings of the stages or in a room adjoining. This is not without its own peculiar effectiveness; Bough-

ton is too clever a stage-manager to allow it to be otherwise. But it is not what is intended, and we shall have to wait until happier times for proof that this, like most of the other ideas of these talented artists, is a step forward in stage technic. Personally I have little doubt on the matter.

The idea that the chorus should express mass-feeling is only what is behind the general practice of using an opera chorus, though it is often overlooked and the chorus given too positive a position as a separate character. The method, already mentioned, of using it as a background to the other characters in their mental and emotional conditions is the most noticeable development. It is not an innovation, but a rapid development, for its chief object is to obtain in a more subtle and more effective manner the same enforcements of ideas as the old-fashioned punctuation of a solo by the choral repetition of its main phrases.

It would hardly give a fair view of this gallant attempt to place British drama and British music on right lines if one omitted to mention other splendid programs presented at Glastonbury several times each year. Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris*, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and the mediaeval morality play *Everyman* have been presented many times; Boughton's very pretty and popular children's ballet, *Snow-White*, designed by Margaret Morris, has been played several times by the children of the village; excerpts from *Parsifal* and *Tristan and Isolde*, Lady Gregory's *The Traveling Man*, W. W. Gibson's *The Night Shift* and scenes from Euripides' *Heraclidae* have each had a few performances. Besides the two first dramas of the Arthurian cycle, Boughton's most popular opera, *The Immortal Hour*, his Christmas mystery play, *Bethlehem*, and short operas by Edgar

Bainton and Clarence Raybould have received their inauguration. And to fill up the corners of the programs many shorter works have been played and recitals of folksongs and folklore given by those best qualified for the task.

Whether the whole British speaking race will ever throng to the Glastonbury Theatre remains to be seen. At present the preparation for the establishment of such a theatre is resulting in able, interesting work.

HERBERT AUTCLIFFE.

CHARACTERIZATION VS. SITUATION



THE well-known playwright, Hartley Manners, has just declared that the development of character is the only real problem for the dramatist, and that a play cannot be said to be formless which successfully portrays the human beings it sets before us.

"The only real form I feel disposed to recognize in writing for the theatre," he says, "is the consistent development of character. Let situation take care of itself. Character makes situation."

More and more I think this point of view has come to be representative of the most sincere playwrights. But obviously it is not one to which the manager will readily subscribe. Not because the manager may not be sufficiently enlightened to realize that the truest action may be internal—an invisible struggle between clashing wills rather than a visible fight between clashing bodies—but because once granted that characterization is of crucial importance, the manager will have to treat the text of a play with far greater respect and consideration than up to the present moment he has been inclined to do. To speak to the actor of "types," is to make him see red, but though I say it with fear in my heart, I really believe that many plays have been misinterpreted by a lack of the proper "types." I have all due respect for the art of miming which permits one temperament to simulate another, I appreciate the wizardry of a clever make-up, but obviously there are limits beyond which

one cannot go without distorting the author's meaning. I hold no brief for the theory that one's appearance off the stage should be the sole or even the most important test for the doling out of parts. I am perfectly willing that the test should be applied only to one's appearance *on* the stage; nevertheless, while our modern audiences are more sensitive to the realistic atmosphere of a play than to the declamation of sonorous soliloquies, the sense of reality that an actor is able to impart to a characterization is of fundamental and constantly growing importance. To remind me that Conway Tearle is not always the fascinating lover, but was admirably real as that tough citizen, Bill Walker, in *Major Barbara*, to remind me that Sarah Bernhardt, an old and crippled woman, can brilliantly portray a youthful soldier, that O. P. Heggie is equally delightful as a bored young millionaire, a plodding old clerk, or a gentle martyr of the early Christian church, is quite beside the mark, for these did fully succeed in creating on the stage the desired impression. That is all that I ask. We must, of course, safeguard the tradition of the art of acting; we must ridicule out of court the manager who is of so inelastic a mind as to hold that red hair and freckles, in order to "get across," must be a matter of roots and pigment. He should hold seriously and courageously to a faith that the characters that have been painfully and conscientiously evolved by the playwright, must interpret the author's intentions both spiritually and outwardly. The test of an orchestral performance is the smooth and beautiful rendering of the ideas of the composer, and to give a smooth and beautiful rendering of the ideas of the playwright is, or should be, the test of a stage production. I need scarcely say that I do not seriously object to Miss Barrymore's blonde wig in

the latest—though who shall say the last?—revival of *La Dame aux Camelias*, notwithstanding Dumas fils' description of Marguerite's black curls, nor am I greatly disturbed by the raven locks of Mr. Tearle in the place of the blonde hair bestowed on Armande by his creator, but I have in mind certain recently produced plays the meaning of which has been utterly distorted by the managerial tendency to cast an eye upon the drawing powers of a star, instead of on the sincere interpretation of the play. How different is the case of the other arts! We shudder as we recall that Rembrandt's *Night Watch* was cut to make it fit into a certain space in the Burghers' Hall. We would probably rain protests upon the daring conductor who would play *as presto* the *adagio* even of a living composer who is not a classic. The integrity of a musical composition, a picture, or a statue is well recognized. In the case of even so much discussed and villified a piece of sculpture as Barnard's *Lincoln*, it is quite understood that it is to be taken "*as is*," or *not at all*. No one, so far as I know, has suggested that the hands be forcibly removed from the pit of the stomach, or that a Roman toga be thrown carelessly over the shoulders, not by the sculptor, mind you, but by someone else who not by birth, by association, or by culture may be supposed to enter into the spirit of the creator. Now, while the immediate cause of this outburst is the production in New York of a highly successful play, *Why Marry?* by Jesse Lynch Williams, nevertheless, I have long nursed within me an indignant protest that the clear intention of the playwright is so often ignored. Take the case of one of our great American plays, *The Great Divide*, by William Moody, a distinguished poet who, if anyone could, would have spoken to the managerial ear with authority. I saw

its first production in New York with Mr. Henry Miller as Ghent and Miss Margaret Anglin as Ruth Jordan. I saw it some years later, with Ghent acted again by Mr. Miller, and Ruth Jordan acted by Miss Gladys Hanson, a more beautiful and less mature woman than Miss Anglin, but neither actress remotely approached the young heroine imagined by Mr. Moody. An admirer of Mr. Moody's verse, and his other play, *The Faith Healer*, nevertheless I had always resented the high position which the judgment of the best critics had given to *The Great Divide*. The motivation, from the heroine's offer of marriage to her dislike of her offspring, seemed to me poor and inconclusive; moreover, her failure to "play the game," her sullenness, above all her utterly abnormal (or shall I say sub-normal?) horror of the marital relation, her passionate reproach to her husband for not dwelling longer in Platonic companionship (even while she admitted the beauty and chivalry of his conduct, admitted, too, that Time was drawing them swiftly together), frankly disgusted me. Miss Anglin made her simply a disagreeable, nagging woman, Miss Hanson softened my irritation by so much as an entrancing exterior could, but neither gave me the slightest clue as to what the author really intended. Remember, he had not drawn an ordinary New England spinster. At the rising of the curtain she refused the hand of a cultured gentleman from the eastern states because he was "too finished" a product. Everything, her love of the West, its wild scenery, its wilder men, was calculated to show she was anything but the Puritan with sluggish, anaemic blood creeping through her veins. One moment she was painted as poetic, temperamental, imaginative, brave, fine and true, flying straight as an arrow to the heart of her mate, the

next literal, implacable, unimaginative, cowardly, untrue and resentful. Moreover, what could be a falser note—so I reasoned—than her indifference to her own baby, if we were to accept the final curtain that she had always recognized in Ghent her true lover and sought-for mate? Whether her pride rebelled or not, the child was flesh and bone of the man she loved, and she inevitably would have poured all her poor wronged affection on her offspring—hers and his.

And what was the motive that made her choose Ghent of the three men as they stood there coveting her body? As played by Mr. Miller (with his wide-brimmed hat well over his face, you remember, and well in the shadow so that his age would not tell too heavily against him) it certainly looked as if Ruth went for protection to the larger, more powerful—or at least fatter—of the men. Not a glimpse was there of the poetic idea that, notwithstanding all the horror and the terror, the young thing had recognized her own true mate, not a suggestion that under it all heart spoke to heart. No, for the author had set it down “Ghent is *younger* than Dutch, and taller, but *less* powerfully built,” so it was something else than brute strength that caused Ruth, little Ruth, *poor, distracted child*, to give herself to the one for life, trusting him to keep his bargain.

“Little Ruth, poor, distracted child!” Does this seem rather inappropriate language to apply to either of the mature women who acted the part? But the author says plainly: “Ruth Jordan, a girl of nineteen, stands at the window looking out.”

Now, I have always held that no play can be known solely by its stage production, any more than it can be realized solely through its publication, *unless the stage production given it is perfect in its attunement to the spirit and intent of the author*. Therefore, I

have always maintained that one should not reach a definite conclusion about a play until one has both read it and seen it acted. One's final judgment depends not so much upon whether one first sees it or reads it, as upon the emphasis one chooses to place upon plot or acting. I have frequently had occasion to point out the fact that being familiar with the plot of a play places one's interest upon its rendition. The comparative unfamiliarity of the average American audience with the printed drama is one of the basic causes for the careless, incomplete, stage productions that many of our playwrights have to submit to—or go unproduced. I confess I was skeptical of great results from reading *The Great Divide* after having twice seen it performed. And yet on the very first page I came across this description of Ruth Jordan as a young girl of nineteen, as by magic shedding a light on the entire play, changing it in my eyes from a most uneven, uncertainly and poorly motivated piece of work to that play which combines, more than any other work of an American dramatist, a serious interpretation of life, treated with poetic imagination and joined to a tense dramatic situation.

Do I exaggerate the potency of the printed version? I think not, for it is obvious to the most unthinking that the reactions of a romantically inclined child of nineteen are very different from those of a mature woman, and all the indecisions, the suppressed tendernesses, the gusts of exaggerated horror, the absence of poise and understanding which repelled me in the one, I found perfectly natural, indeed touchingly pathetic in the other. Also the rash adventure of the intoxicated Ghent takes on quite other proportions when one reflects that it was the action not of a mature man of forty, but of a wild

and careless youth whose character was still in the making.

This to me is perhaps the most flagrant example of the exigencies of histrionic egoism (or it may have been mere managerial confidence in the stellar system) which destroyed the true values of a great and beautiful play. Truly, here indeed was a case which proved the truth of Mr. Manners' dictum, "Character makes situation."

And so we come to *Why Marry?* that brilliant comedy by Mr. Jesse Lynch Williams, which is now being performed in New York with a company which in cruder days would have been announced as an "all-star cast," every one of whom is admirable except for the fact that four of them bear not the slightest resemblance to anything the author ever intended them to be. No wonder Mr. Williams has just indulged in a highly indiscreet interview in which he declares himself by no means won over to being a playwright! He admits:

"The disappointments are far keener when you write a play. You have built up a character, endowing it with flesh and blood, and then when you see the poor distorted creature wandering out there before your eyes, you wonder how it could have happened."

We have long heard the wail of the unproduced playwright. This, you see, is a cry from the heart of the produced, successful playwright. The first instance of miscasting in *Why Marry?* is Miss Beatrice Beckley as Lucy, John's wife, who is supposed to epitomize the evils of the old-fashioned union. When one recalls that Miss Beckley made an admirable Vivie Warren in last year's revival of *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, that she was again admirably cast as the very up-to-date woman physician in Eugene Walter's *The Knife*, it is not difficult to imagine that she is not

happy in the part of Mrs. John. It is no criticism of her art to say that her large masculine frame and height, her assertiveness, her deep voice and precise enunciation, highly characteristic as they are of her own personality, do not lend themselves readily to the interpretation of a timorous echo of her husband's wishes. The part of the more intrepid Jean was taken by a mere strip of a girl, and had the audience been permitted to read Mr. Williams' description of the two women, it would certainly have been amused to think that Lucy was supposed to be a great contrast to Jean's "*more modern, less delicate*" charm; furthermore, that "Jean is frank and brave, Lucy indirect and timid, pretty but fading, forty but fighting it." But these two instances of the ignoring of an author's conception are slight in significance compared to the crucial mischaracterizations of the hero and heroine. To put it bluntly: did Mr. Williams write an amusing, light, very light, comedy as a "vehicle"—hateful term—for two attractive young matinee idols, or did he put his finger on a real difficulty of modern economic conditions—the postponement of marriage until middle age has secured a competence—and interpret it in terms of the drama, incidentally, by the way, shedding a highly illuminative light upon such accessory questions as the economic independence of the married woman, the training of young girls to be self-supporting, the pecuniary reward of scientists and clergymen, and the problem of divorce thrown in for good measure?

The heroine "Helen, a more or less new woman," as the author describes her, is impersonated by Miss Estelle Winwood, one of the sweetest, daintiest young actresses on the stage, a veritable sylph, with a soft little voice with a wonderfully appealing note

in it, and yet the author (who, come to think on it, ought to know) describes her as "a beautiful woman of twenty-nine, tall, strong, glorious—plenty of old-fashioned charm, despite her new-fashioned ideas." Now, charming as Miss Winwood undoubtedly is, a rarely appealing figure, nevertheless she is just as much like a college graduate of nearly thirty who has been conducting difficult research work at a scientific institute, as a fine Arabian charger is like a dray horse. Far be it from me to deny that a laboratory assistant may be beautiful; far be it from my purpose to assert, notwithstanding the dictum of George Eliot, that a rare and brilliant scientific ability cannot be coupled with personal charm, yet not even her most ardent admirer would think of describing Miss Winwood as a tall, glorious creature! Moreover it does tax the credulity to imagine her with one eye screwed into the nozzle of a microscope! I assure you to hear her, suddenly in the course of her pretended love-making, give utterance to the terrible words, "anterior poliomyelitis," was quite as much a shock to the audience as to her listeners on the stage. After all, it is a well-known axiom that in art it is not the truth that is so important as the appearance of truth. To be exact means little; to be convincing, everything. We as an audience scarcely concern ourselves with the question if any young physician who has inoculated himself for yellow fever, and devoted the rest of his days to the pursuit of the germ of anterior poliomyelitis, can possibly be as good-looking as Shelley Hull, or with the problem whether any laboratory assistant could possibly look as thoroughly delectable as Estelle Winwood, but we do ask, and have every right to ask, do these two give *vraisemblance* to the scene? Do they really put before us the throbbing, vital prob-

lem that we see on all sides about us in real life? Does the heroine make us feel she is really the big-hearted, intellectual, but thoroughly human, girl who will sacrifice convention rather than lose her lover, or see him lose himself? I think the answer must be in the negative.

Obviously the manager has played safe. He is not at all sure that the theatregoing public is interested in the problem of the postponed marriage, or the economic independence of married women, but he is quite, quite sure that it, or rather she, is interested in seeing that handsome young actor, Shelley Hull, make love so divinely. Did you ever hear anyone say "I love you" more thrillingly? And the "average sensual man" may not take very seriously a young woman worker who wants neither to give up her professional career nor to ruin that of her lover, but he cannot fail to be interested in the woes and tribulations of so pretty and winsome a creature as Estelle Winwood. One cannot but regret that Mr. Williams did not possess the authority and determination of Mr. Bernard Shaw, who would have seen to it that Mr. Manager would have cast the play so that the characters, each and every one, lived and had their being as their creator had intended them.

It seems almost ungracious to cavil at a cast which contains two such admirable characterizations as the judge, played by the irrepressible Nat Goodwin, and the clergyman, exquisitely interpreted by that rare and dignified artist, Ernest Lawford. Yet, I cannot but feel that much that is fine and true in the play, much that lifts it above the average run of plays, will inevitably escape us in the present production. The character of Helen is really a very beautiful one. It would be a mistake, notwithstanding the author's warning that she "does not believe in marriage," to

mistake her for one of these most unpleasant young women who parade in strange costumes and stranger attitudes, in their search for "self-expression," whatever that really is. She is quite a different type from the heroine of the Danish *Why Marry?*—Karen, now on the boards. Helen is warm, affectionate, and quite old fashioned enough to love babies and think no marriage complete without them; moreover, she unhesitatingly yields her career as secondary to that of her husband. There is nothing at all about her of the rebellious anarchist, and the criticism that I have heard aimed at the amusing and unexpected denouement is quite unfair, for she had really never rebelled at marriage in itself, but merely marriage if it meant a burden to the man whom she loved, and whose future she did not intend to ruin. Since Brother John raised the young man's salary to a very livable amount, she had certainly no objections to the marriage ceremony's being performed. And speaking of the question of salary, it seems a pity that Mr. Williams felt it incumbent upon him to play with loaded dice. I can assure him that three thousand dollars is not quite the usual salary of "scientists, college professors and that sort of thing"—I understood that the city of New York was implied—nor, on the other hand, is it at all usual for even the most successful of practitioners to make a million! But while in some instances I long for the superb fairness and sportsmanship of Galsworthy, nevertheless Mr. Williams has written a play which, for all its light-hearted fun, its epigram and sparkle, makes us face frankly a very real problem that not only confronts us now, but which is bound to become increasingly urgent as the full toll of the war is taken. We simply cannot go on for long permitting our youth to remain celibates, nor can we permit them to

marry with a fixed determination to avoid having children. We may as well resign ourselves to seeing welcomed some of the more radical ideas concerning marriage and motherhood which only a few years ago would have been shooed off the scene.

ANNIE NATHAN MEYER.

THE NEW ART OF THE PHOTOPLAY- DRAMATIST

PERHAPS it is nine o'clock in the evening, and you have just returned from the moving picture theatre around the corner. You went there soon after dinner, hoping to spend a pleasant evening. But, alas! You could not bring yourself to sit through the last two reels of that much heralded "feature." The man next to you got to muttering something about "an insult to public intelligence." You agreed with him in your innermost soul, for you could discover in the film nothing but stupid and impossible situations, unhuman characters, and an insipid plot. Your intelligence was hurt. How can people write such "stuff"? you asked yourself. You came home, picked up your favorite magazine, and determined to find in it, if possible, something more worthwhile than the "movies."

But now, quite unexpectedly, you find yourself confronted with an article in cold type about the moving picture. You are on the verge of passing it by. No, the title attracts you, "The New Art of the Photoplay-Dramatist." Is there anything *new* in the moving picture? Can we hope ever to find anything approaching true *art* in it? Can it justly claim the title of *drama*? Your experience earlier in the evening makes you a bit skeptical, and certainly none too optimistic. But you read on.

Yes, something new is going to happen to the photoplay; in fact, is already happening. Art is going

to replace commercialism; there are a few instances of this tendency looming up on the distant horizon. The *photoplay-dramatist* is going to replace the scenario writer.

These statements sound pleasant to you, especially after your unfortunate experience tonight. They dispel some of the pessimistic clouds hovering over your head, and you half determine that it will be safe for you to schedule your next attendance at a photoplay for two or three years hence. Then you will witness a performance more satisfying than the one you saw tonight. You will expect to go then to a dignified photo-drama theatre. Then you will see a new kind of play, which will bear as little resemblance to the jumble from which you fled tonight as Pinero's *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* bears to some of the "masterpieces" produced by Shakespeare's imitators.

The photoplay has advanced by leaps and bounds, within the last few years, in every respect but one. The photography of today is beyond comparison with that of even five or six years ago: the projection is almost flickerless. The scenes are produced with striking accuracy and artistic effect. The players for the screen have, with the spirit of true artists, mastered the difficult art of silent dramatic interpretation. The producers are often men of rare ability and talent. But the one essential person to a complete artistic whole has been lamentably neglected. The one person who supplies the intellectual and emotional element of a play has hardly been allowed to let his genius radiate from the screen.

On the legitimate stage we see and hear very little which would not be approved by the playwright. He it is who carefully describes the scenes; he it is who gives stage directions; and it is he who puts every

word that is spoken into the mouths of his characters. The most able of contemporary English dramatists, Sir Arthur Pinero, regards the playwright's function as of such importance that he personally stages practically all of his plays. The precedents established by Molière are regarded with such estimation by the actors and producers of his plays today, that the performances which they give are almost identical with those approved by the illustrious French actor-playwright of the seventeenth century.

How can people write such "stuff"? you asked yourself as you left that theatre tonight. As a matter of fact, nobody wrote it. Somebody, whom we call a scenario writer or photo-playwright, supplied the bare outline of the action. It was probably a worthwhile effort—as far as it went. But what you saw was very far from what this writer pictured to himself when he was conceiving his story. His manuscript, necessarily very brief, because the director to whom it was handed could not be trammelled by any long explanations, was paid for and smiled at; paid for, because it is easier to sign a check than it is to think, and smiled at, because it is easier to find fault than it is to give careful consideration to the product of someone else's mind.

The director to whom was intrusted the producing of the play proceeded to rehash, re-write, or alter the story to suit himself. The carpenter was instructed to build certain scene "sets," without knowing anything about the story which was to be portrayed in them, and thus was unable to give as effective an atmosphere to them as he otherwise might have given. The actors were probably only given directions as to what to do in any particular scene, and since the scenes were rehearsed and photographed in any order rather than the logical one, it is quite likely that

even after the whole was photographed, they had only a vague idea as to what the story was about.

Even though the producer, the actors, and the scene painter have done their best to create an artistic piece of work, the film must, before reaching you in the theatre, go through the hands of the individual known as the "joiner," and then, of course, also pass the censors. It is the joiner who has the greatest power of destroying the logical sequence of a play. It is his task to join the different scenes together in proper order and to insert "leaders" and "cut-ins." It may be his task to reduce a play originally requiring ten thousand feet of film to the "standard" length of five thousand feet. Such a task may be done without greatly injuring the main plot of a story, but it certainly cannot be done without very often distorting, or even annihilating, the artistic intentions of the author, the producer, and the actors.

Then, again, the joiner, in running over and over the different sections of the film to determine which portions shall be eliminated, becomes so familiar with what he believes to be the essential features of the plot that the finished product is logical only to his mind, which can supply the missing details. It is generally at this stage of the evolution of the film that what are known as "loose ends" and "false leads" come into evidence. The author and producer may provide in one part of a photoplay certain action which has no significance except in so far as it is shown in connection with some other scenes. If these scenes are cut out by some one who sees only one phase of the plot of the play, the incidents related will seem absurd and unsatisfying to the thoughtful spectator.

Finally, we must consider the "trimming" which a film often gets by the censors. This may be done

by them conscientiously enough, and for sound reasons. The result, however, cannot be a logical whole, even if the conscientious joiner did send it out as such. Scenes and leaders are seldom, if ever, improved after they have been condemned by the Board of Censors; they are simply omitted.

Imagine, if you can, a play by Ibsen, Shaw, or Pinero undergoing such treatment! Would you not be justified in hurling imprecations at the dramatist and declaring him a raving, illogical maniac of fantastic dreams? Fortunately, however, for the author of the spoken drama, as well as for the novelist, he has chosen to express himself in writing, so that should "his" play be filmed in some such destructive manner as we have described, we might still do him the justice of reading his story in type, and thus understand what he really intended to convey.

But a new era is dawning. The photo-dramatist is coming into his own. Gradually the men who have invested millions in the moving picture industry are realizing that the mechanical combination of high-salaried "stars," the most perfect photography, and the most beautiful and expensive settings, cannot of themselves result in really worthwhile picture plays. The coöperation of the capable dramatist is required. He must supply the backbone of the play. He must be a master of his art not merely a salaried employe, as is now so often the case, engaged to grind out so many "plots" per week to meet studio conditions.

In every art it is not what the artist does that counts, but how he does it. The subject or the plot is secondary. A dozen sculptors may choose David as the subject for a statue; but it takes a Michael Angelo to produce a statue worthy of world praise. A thousand authors have written plays or novels with forgery as the basic motive of the plot; but it takes

an Ibsen to conceive *A Doll's House*. It is *how* an artist interprets his conception that distinguishes his work from that of all others.

The time is not far distant when the photo-dramatist will be the important individual in the studio. The director, the scenic artist, the actors, as well as the joiner, will then do *his* bidding. They will do all in their power to produce the playwright's play in the manner in which he intended it to be presented, just as is now done on the legitimate stage with a play by, let us say, Augustus Thomas. The director and the joiner will then no longer hash up stories to suit their conception as to what constitutes proper plot technique.

Then, perhaps, also the Board of Censors will be no longer necessary. Even now the writer of the original story is seldom responsible for the scenes which the censors condemn. What the Board disapproves of has not infrequently been originated by the producer in his effort to put "punch" into an otherwise insipid plot. When photoplays are conceived by men who know their craft, men who are trained dramatists, plays will be produced which rely for their appeal, not on sensational or indecent scenes, but on the skill and force of their dramatic construction.

The powers who control the finances of the studios are gradually coming to realize that it is the dramatist who can produce the best drama. When the competent writer is given to understand that his *individuality* will be allowed to speak on the screen as it does in his novel or in his spoken play, he will be more willing than he is now to turn his attention to the new medium of expression.

Already there are a few companies which are adopting, with gratifying success, this attitude in

the production of their plays. They have secured the services of men really competent to conceive and to construct worthy plays. These are not men who "just naturally" can write feature plays. They have, for the most part, learned the difficult art of dramatic construction through years of patient study of the spoken drama. Photoplay writing cannot be learned overnight—at least not the kind that, we hope, will supply the film stories in the future. It rests with the qualified dramatist to infuse new art and real drama into the photoplay.

RICHARD SILVESTER.

THE DRAMATIST'S EVOLVING HEROINES

W

HETHER women can change and are actually changing as much as Feminists would have us believe they can and are, is a fact for Feminists and the future to demonstrate. As material for the drama, however, it is even now noticeable that they are not what we used to think them.

In the eyes of the playmaker, woman has changed already. That is a conclusion it seems fair to draw from the work of dramatists in whose plays life is being best interpreted today.

In the more or less truthful mirror that the contemporary drama holds up to nature, we see women more often and more prominently reflected than formerly, and the reflections that are shown us are different from those the same mirror once disclosed. Men have always been the central figures in a majority of dramas. Upon men, generations of playwrights have directed the eyes and the interest of their audiences; men have been kept in the foreground usually, women in the background or at most in the middle distance. The lists of *dramatis personae* that have prefaced plays for centuries are indices of the relative importance of the sexes dramatically. It was customary, until comparatively recent years, to display the names of the numerous male characters of the cast at the head of the list, while the women of the play, much in the minority, were huddled together in humiliation at the end. Such is not the custom now. Woman has become a person of

dramatic importance and she is accorded a position of commensurate emphasis in the lists of characters. Not only is she as prominent as man in the plays of the present; playwrights are making her in a large number of their dramas the protagonist, centering the interest in her, turning the spotlight searchingly upon her. One has only to note the preponderance of women as protagonists in the work of men so dissimilar as Pinero, Shaw and Barrie, to realize the nature of the position woman has risen to in the drama of today.

Elizabeth Robins says Euripides predicted some such rise when he said:

“And woman, yea, woman, shall be terrible in story.
The tales, too, me seemeth, shall be other than of
yore.”

The change in her character may be much or little—that is immaterial. It may be she is not changing at all. But her ambitions and activities undoubtedly have changed and she herself is at least trying hard to do so, too. It is by virtue of this fact, presumably, that the dramatist finds in her a new significance. She attracts him partly because the question of her change makes her a subject of topical interest, principally for the reason that it makes her a dramatic figure. Hitherto no more has been expected of her than that she be experienced in the business of being a woman. That is a subsidiary business, of little importance dramatically compared with the more dynamic and diverting business of being a man. But alterations in the conceptions of what is comprised by the business of being a woman are resulting in an extension of the scope of that business and a consequent demand among women for new abilities to meet the new requirements. So, realizing that her

training, secured in accordance with old traditions, is insufficient to equip her to satisfy the new demands, she feels that she must acquire new resources, that she must, in fact, be something different. But in her effort to be different she is handicapped by considerable haziness in her ideas as to how much and in what ways she should be different. And so she is setting out in search of her new self, or of the particular one of her many selves that best fits her for survival under changed conditions. And like Margaret in *Fanny's First Play* she finds her experiences rather startling. Some of her adventures in the realm of progress serve only to lead her up blind alleys; others end in enlightenment; but all, or nearly all, are dramatic. That is the point that interests the dramatist. Her gropings about for truth and light occasion innumerable conflicts of will and ideas, numberless contrasts of character and ideals. And in conflict and contrast, of course, the playwright revels.

Sometimes, when the playwright is, for the moment at least, a propagandist, he ardently champions his woman protagonist. George Middleton has done so in *Nowadays* and other dramas. And in *La Femme Seule*, recently shown in New York, Eugene Brieux gave the stage a play which A. B. Walkley, paraphrasing Jules Verne, has aptly characterized as "Round the Woman Question in Two and One-half Hours." Often the dramatist covertly exploits woman and her questions; on occasion he simply portrays her dispassionately, as Granville Barker portrays Alice in *The Voysey Inheritance*. And in the work of other playwrights, of whom the virile Strindberg is generally considered the classic example, she is savagely excoriated.

Contemporary drama represents the changing heroines in three phases of their metamorphosis. In

a few modern plays the clinging-vine type of heroine still clings. She is a relic of the days when women of all ages were expected—and content—to be flappers. Though she survives, her hold on both dramatist and public seems to have loosened somewhat. She receives less attention, now that so many women have begun to strive to be sturdy oaks themselves. The woman with one foot reluctantly in the past and the other precariously in the present is shown in other dramas. She has the desire but not the ability and strength to stand alone. In many more the heroine has been completely modernized. She has cut loose from confining bonds. She aspires with increasing success to the captaincy of her own particular soul. She longs for no one to lean upon.

Several seasons ago the Welsh Players presented to an unappreciative American public a play called *Change*, by J. O. Francis. It was a grim and impressive anatomy of progress, an almost complete epitome of the present. Only one type of woman, however, was depicted in it. The mother in the play was representative of the apparently passing type of passive woman. She was plastic and, therefore, even in her old age, more amenable to change than her inflexible husband. She made no resistance to progress, but neither was she inspired to action by it. She was one of its victims, not one of its champions. In other words, she was the old type of heroine—the type represented so well by Leonora, to whom Barrie in *The Legend of Leonora*, says a reluctant farewell: “You are not of today—foolish, wayward, unself-conscious, communicative Leonora. The ladies of today are different and—wiser. But as we look longingly at you, we see again, in their habit as they lived, those out-of-date, unreasoning creatures, our mothers and grandmothers, and other ones long ago

loved and lost—and as if you were the last woman, Leonora, we bid you hail and farewell.”

Of course, Barrie himself has not really bade her farewell. His dramas have been and always, no doubt, will be full of Leonoras. The model for his women, as he has said in *Margaret Ogilvie*, is his mother, and his mother was Leonora in the flesh. In his recent plays, *A Kiss for Cinderella*, *The New Word*, and *The Old Lady Shows Her Medals*, one finds the same type still serving him as heroine. And this very feminine person has supplied many other playwrights of today with the stuff of which drama is made. Hubert Henry Davies made her the heroine of *The Mollusc* and showed therein, as Barrie has so often done, that her passivity is not always impotence. A. E. Thomas had to let her have pretty much her own way in *Her Husband's Wife*. Lady Cicely, in Shaw's *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*, is much the same woman, a little more overtly masterful than Barrie's feminine protagonists, somewhat more modern, and sufficiently rationalized to make her capable of other than merely instinctive action.

This type of heroine is quite content to be unchanging, and her chief charm—as well as her most effective weapon—is her unmixed womanliness. But endearing and adorable as she undoubtedly is, the modern dramatist does not let his enlivened interest in women end with her. She is not completely representative of modern womanhood. There exists today the woman who, unlike the Leonoras, is not content to be unchanging. Often she is like them in that she has spent her youth in hovering safely about the lee shore of life, buffeted only by blasts that have been tempered for her. If such is the case, when she sets out under her own sail to leave the sheltered waters, she becomes increasingly dramatic.

We see her then as the woman in whom change is going on. Hers is an attempt to trade horses in the middle of the stream. And, puzzled and helpless, she finds herself stranded between the old and the new ideas, ideals and conventions. As a new figure, she piques the interest of the playwright; her problems and predicaments present to him an almost virgin field.

Her plight affords a theme for various kinds of play—genial farce, satiric comedy, and often poignant tragedy. The type is summed up in Clare Dedmond, the heroine of John Galsworthy's *Fugitive*. As Huntington says of her in that play, "She's not one of this new sort of woman. She's always been looked after, and had things done for her. Pluck she's got but that's all, and she's bound to come to grief." "Very likely," answers Malise, "the first birds do." And Clare does. She is of the old order, and, for the old order, changing to the new is often tragic because the new order necessitates not only new ideas and impulses, but the initiative and resource, often even the ruthlessness, to act upon them. Those qualifications are acquired only through a new kind of training; and Clare and the women like her lack that training. The heroine of Broadhurst's play of a few seasons ago, *Bought and Paid For*, on the other hand, when placed in Clare's predicament, was not so helpless and hopeless, since before her marriage she had acquired self-sufficiency. She had learned to advantage all that working for six dollars or so a week can teach a girl. She could take care of herself. And so could Fanny in *Hindle Wakes*, who proclaimed openly and proudly that she needed and would have no protector. So the fate of the girl in Broadhurst's play, even if chance had not intervened in her behalf, and the fate of Fanny who did not care

in the least for the aid of chance, would have been less pitiful than Clare's for the reason that they were less helpless. They were flowers rooted in the present. Clare Dedmond and the type she stands for are rooted in the past.

It is the girl who represents woman in her greatest and most positive reaction to changing conditions who is the most striking variation in the evolution of the heroine. In Ibsen's *The Doll's House*, Nora, one of the old type, the doll woman, realized what she must do to cease to be a doll; and slamming the door she went out into the world to do it. Clare Dedmond shows her failing; in Barrie's *Twelve-Pound Look*, she is depicted succeeding. Since Nora slammed the door some forty years ago, numberless heroines have found it increasingly less difficult to go out into the world and get on alone. And in the theatre the doll woman has slowly given place to a heroine more dynamic, more masterfully feminine.

Sons have always been wayward and healthily egoistic in the pursuit of new ideas and ideals. Daughters have been static. They have ceased to be so now, in intent at least. The girl most evident in the drama of today is "this new sort of woman." Other dramatists than Barrie have noted that she is "different and—wiser." There is in her little of Leonora, and she is troubled by none of the doubts and fears and inefficiencies of Clare, the transitional type.

Usually she is young and either unmarried or not long a matron. Of her life the artist of fate has as yet made only experimental sketches, one of which will later be slowly and permanently painted in. She is resolved to have a hand in the result, to shape, in so far as she can, the course of her life. Fervor, enthusiasm, strength, audacity and—most disturbing

of all to conventional thought—intellectual curiosity and acquisitiveness are her most notable characteristics. Armed with all the weapons that the woman of yesterday, the old heroine, used only in self-defense and irrationally or not at all, the weapons which in the hands of the half-way heroine are handicaps because she does not know how to make them instruments of aggression—armed with these and a few new ones that she has evolved, she is taking the offensive in the drama of the present.

Ibsen himself drew several portraits of her, among them Hedda Gabler, Hilda Wangel, and Rebecca West. Shaw and his contemporaries have since supplied theatregoers with an almost endless succession of others: Mrs. Ebbsmith, Vivie, Margaret, Violet—Shaw's plays are full of them, Pinero's less so.

In the theatres of New York in recent seasons this type of feminine protagonist has been repeatedly represented. We saw her setting her elders by the ears in *Fanny's First Play*, vindicating herself in Sheldon's *The High Road*, making her declaration of independence in *Her Own Money*, asserting her equality in *The Magnanimous Lover*, scorning the expedient of a forced marriage in *Hindle Wakes*, taking the hero under her wing in *The Big Idea*, laughing at the law in *Within the Law*, rising from the streets in *Outcast*, flitting about unattached and charming in *Good Gracious Annabelle*, pulling social strings in *Our Betters*, manipulating puppets in shoddy *Shirley Kaye*, making it uncomfortable for prudes in *Hush*, and, in general, throwing light on the woman's side of many questions, reacting to modern life in a manner equally modern.

This self-asserting young woman has hold of all the strings in the drama and shows not the least compunction about pulling them. She is the last word in heroines.

ARTHUR POLLOCK.

MARTHA'S MOURNING

A Play in One Act by PHOEBE HOFFMAN.

[In a kitchen an ill old woman lies on a sofa near the stove. Near at hand is a table with some medicines and an oil lamp. In the corner stands a fine old secretary now used for china. A handsome mahogany mirror hangs in full view of the sofa. The old woman's niece, Martha, sits by the stove. She is a timid, shabbily dressed girl with pretty hair mercilessly dragged back from a pale face, which is illumined by sad, gentle eyes. From time to time she shivers between half-choked sobs. At last, glancing at the meager fire, she rises cautiously to get a log of wood.]

AUNTY [*fearfully*]. Stop, stop. [*Controlling herself.*] Don't be wastin' the wood. [*MARTHA drops the wood and slinks back to her seat.*]

MARTHA [*apologetically*]. It's so cold, Aunt.

AUNTY [*grimly*]. It makes me think of what's comin' to me hereafter. [*Nervously.*] Not that I'm afraid! [*MARTHA sits down, despondently murmuring to herself.*]

AUNTY [*sharply*]. Don't be mumblin' any more prayers to yerself. I got through this world without askin' help from folk and I don't want others beggin' my pardon in the next. I'm not afraid to face the Lord myself.

MARTHA [*weeping*]. But Aunt, that's agin all religion. Let me run and get the minister; he'll explain everything to ye.

AUNTY [*with determination*]. No, no, Martha. The last black-coated sniveller came here when the man died. He couldn't change my notions now.

MARTHA. Aunty, let me help you up to bed.

AUNTY. You'll be the first of our folk to die in yer bed; they'll never say it of me.

[*MARTHA, silent, sits with her hands in her lap looking vacantly into the fire. Once or twice she starts murmuring a prayer but checks herself fearfully. AUNTY lies rigid, suffering acute mental torture. Several times she raises her hands as if in prayer, but the unaccustomed words will not come to her lips. A clock strikes eight and MARTHA rises and pours some medicine into a tea-spoon.*]

MARTHA [*holding the glass to AUNTY's lips*]. Here's yer physic.

AUNTY [*snatching the spoon and throwing it across the room*]. That stuff might make me die in my sleep. [*MARTHA silently picks up the spoon.*]

AUNTY. You might like that easy kind of an end, I suppose. But I've got red blood in my veins; I'm goin' to fight it out to the last.

[*MARTHA stands for a moment, the spoon in her hands. She is thinking and plucking up courage to say something unusually bold.*]

MARTHA. Aunty, it's pride, not bravery, that's makin' ye fight the Lord. Christ was the bravest man in the world, but He begged for God's mercy and yielded to His will. Ye've defied Him and everyone else all yer life. But, Aunty, you mustn't die feelin' like that. [*Coming closer and patting her hand gently.*] Aunty, yer half crazy with pain. Take some physic and sleep a little and when ye feel easier, throw yerself on the mercy of the Lord; it won't be too late to repent.

[*AUNTY stares at her in astonishment. The truth of*

MARTHA'S statement sinks deeply into her sin-laden conscience, but she is still too proud and obstinate to admit it to MARTHA, whom she has always despised for her meekness.]

AUNTY [*in somewhat softer tones*]. I've got to settle with the Lord in my own way, Martha. [*More weakly.*] I will take some physic; the pain's gnawin' at my shoulder agin—though it's awful to think of good money bein' poured into a dyin' person at the end of a tea-spoon.

[MARTHA gives AUNTY the medicine and watches her settle into a peaceful doze. Then she kneels in silent prayer, shivering till the cold forces her to be active. She feels the windows and draws the rag-carpet against the outside door; then glancing apprehensively at AUNTY, she steals out of the room. She returns in a few moments wearing a shabby old coat and carrying a black fur tippet. She sits down and starts mending the lining. As she turns it, the fur brushes against her cheek and she buries her face in it.]

MARTHA. How soft! [*Drawing the tippet over one shoulder.*] I never had on fur before. How nice it feels! [*She fastens the tippet and stands up. AUNTY awakens and watches her in amazement. She is about to speak, but changes her mind and closes her eyes as MARTHA suddenly remembers to look around.*]

MARTHA. It must be real handsome. [*Cautiously she picks up the lamp and goes over to the mirror, peering at herself admiringly.*] How stylish I look! [*There is a rapping outside. AUNTY chuckles as MARTHA, nearly dropping the lamp in her agitation, puts it on the secretary and opens the door. A neighbor enters.*]

NEIGHBOR [*stumbling over the carpet*]. I near fell. [*She gives MARTHA a quick astonished look out of*

her sharp little eyes and glances inquisitively about the room. She carries a bundle.]

NEIGHBOR. How little ye've changed this place. How's yer Aunty, Martha?

MARTHA [*sadly*]. She's low.

NEIGHBOR. The doctor told me she was goin', and I've come to help ye.

MARTHA [*still standing by the door*]. Thank you. [AUNTY *is about to burst forth in a rage, but something in MARTHA's demeanor restrains her. The NEIGHBOR moves over to the secretary and puts down her bundle.*]

NEIGHBOR. I just brought some things along, as I knew ye'd want somebody in the house with ye.

[MARTHA *glances at AUNTY, who is feigning sleep.*]

MARTHA [*firmly*]. I'm afraid I can't ask ye to stay. Aunty never did like folk about and I know she wouldn't want anybody here now.

NEIGHBOR. But I'll have to dress her out. I've helped with most all the folk that's died in the last twenty years. [AUNTY *shudders.*]

MARTHA. Thank you kindly, but I couldn't let any stranger touch Aunty.

NEIGHBOR. Surely ye don't call me a stranger.

MARTHA. I've been so lonely that everyone seems like a stranger to me, except Aunty.

NEIGHBOR [*spitefully*]. Ye're most dutiful to her memory, seein' how mean she treated ye. [AUNTY *shakes her fist in rage, but subsides hastily as MARTHA looks towards her.*]

MARTHA [*hotly*]. She never was mean. She always shared everything she had with me. [AUNTY *winces.*]

NEIGHBOR [*seeing her chance to catch her up*]. Even her tippet, I suppose. I saw ye prinkin' in

front of the mirror while yer Aunty was on her death-bed.

MARTHA [*struck with a sudden inspiration*]. Yes, she was tellin' me to wear it at her funeral, and ye wouldn't have seen me if ye hadn't been peakin' through the key-hole. [AUNTY *gasps with astonishment*.]

NEIGHBOR [*confused, but not yet downed*]. Indeed, that's very generous; I was goin' to offer ye som' mournin'.

MARTHA [*hesitating*]. I haven't a black dress.

NEIGHBOR [*cheerfully*]. I knew I could be of some use to ye. I'll lend ye my alpaca skirt and widder's hat and veil. They'd be grand with the tippet.

MARTHA. Thank you kindly.

NEIGHBOR [*going to the secretary and picking up her bundle*]. That's a grand piece, Martha. Ye ought to sell it. I know a party that might buy it.

MARTHA. Aunty held on to it through thick and thin and I don't want to part with it either.

NEIGHBOR. It looks as if ye were goin' to be poor enough when yer Aunty's little annuity stops short. I should think ye'd be glad of the money.

MARTHA [*resignedly*]. I know what's comin' to me.

NEIGHBOR [*turning at the door*]. I'll bring the things tomorrer. But Martha, I'll have to charge ye damages if anything happens to my mournin'.

MARTHA [*as she opens the door, she is thoroughly exasperated*]. Nobody asked for yer mournin'; and I'd rather come to Aunty's funeral in this old calico gown than touch it after that. [*She shuts the door in the NEIGHBOR's face*.]

AUNT. Martha.

MARTHA. Yes. [*Suddenly she realizes that she still has on the tippet; terrified at being caught, she*

sinks down beside the sofa a quavering bundle of sobs.] Oh, Aunt, I never did it before.

AUNT [patting her hair, comforting her, and speaking tenderly]. Martha, Martha, how I've treated ye! I never knew what ye was like till I saw ye standin' up to that old pry-eyes that came peakin' in on yer trouble. Why ye used to slip round my finger like a piece of limp dough. The men always did favor ye, Martha, and say, "Why don't ye send Martha to prayer-meetin' and sociables, like other girls?" I'd say, "Ah, she's a poor, colorless thing with no feelin's." Oh, Martha, can ye forgive me?

MARTHA [weeping joyfully]. Aunt, I knew ye'd soften at last, but it's the Lord ye should ask for forgiveness. Let's ask Him together.

AUNT [stiffening up]. No, no, I can't pray. [*Fiercely.*] Impedent old weazel, offerin' ye her shabby mournin'! Run up and fetch down my black silk and bonnet and widder's veil. You'll find 'em in the bottom burrer drawer.

[*While MARTHA is gone, AUNT raises herself slightly and gazes vacantly ahead, lost in deep thought. Suddenly her face brightens as she conceives some brilliant idea, and, with a softened and peaceful smile, she sinks back relieved. MARTHA returns in a few minutes, her arms full of clothes. She stands awkwardly in front of AUNT awaiting directions.*]

MARTHA. What shall I do with 'em?

AUNT [*with business-like briskness*]. Give me the bonnet and veil, and put the silk over there. [*MARTHA moves awkwardly.*] Hurry! I haven't much time left. Now bring me the lamp and the work-basket.

MARTHA [*worried*]. Aunt, what are ye goin' to do?

AUNTY [*spryly*]. Trim ye a decent bit of mournin'.

MARTHA [*shocked*]. Aunty, ye should be turnin' yer thoughts to the Lord.

AUNTY. I'll relieve yer feelin's, Martha, by tellin' ye that I had a sort of revelation from the Lord, while ye was up-stairs, showin' me how I could make ye a kind of retribution.

MARTHA [*eagerly*]. A vision! Aunty, what was it?

AUNTY. No, it was just an idea. I'll tell ye about it by and by. But part of it's trimmin' the mournin'. Now help me up.

MARTHA [*raising her*]. But this doesn't seem quite Christian.

AUNTY. Christian fiddlesticks! I'm doin' as I was told.

MARTHA [*submissively*]. Well, Aunty, I suppose ye know best. Ye always was one fer doin' yer own way. [AUNTY groans as MARTHA arranges her.]

MARTHA [*soothingly*]. Now what?

AUNTY [*still gasping a little for breath*]. Before I trim the bonnet, I ought to tell ye there's a little loose board with a large knot in it back of the stove. Ye can pry it up with a spoon-handle, and ye'll find an old stockin' underneath.

[MARTHA obeys her in blank astonishment.]

AUNTY. Bring me the stockin'. [When MARTHA does so, AUNTY feels it over and over.] There's a wad of bills in this.

MARTHA [*horrified*]. But haven't we always paid our debts?

AUNTY. You fool, it's the money I've been savin' for the last twenty years.

MARTHA [*with great innocence*]. Aunty! ye mean ye've been skimpin' and savin' out of yer little an-

uity all these years, just for me. [*She falls on her knees kissing AUNTY's hand.*] How generous of ye! [*AUNTY is too much taken aback by her misunderstanding to explain it. She is confused and suffers MARTHA's caresses till she can regain her self-control.*]

AUNTY. When ye've paid for the funeral, Martha (and ye best give me a costly funeral; it shows piety) take the savin's to Deacon Wolcott and ask him to invest 'em for ye. Ye'd best wear yer funeral rig; he's an awful one for black. And promise me, Martha, ye'll never let anybody else look after it, even if ye should marry. I don't want some fool spendin' my good money.

MARTHA. Yes, Aunty, I promise.

[*AUNTY pulls a piece of jet out of the stocking and begins pinning it against the bonnet.*]

AUNTY. Jet ain't regular mournin', but it'll spry ye up a bit. Don't stand there like a lump of risin' dough. Git into my black silk; I want to see it on ye.

MARTHA [*astonished*]. But, Aunty, you was savin' it to be laid out in.

AUNTY. But you can make me a real cheap shroud. Mind I want no other women snivellin' around. I cursed at 'em all when the man died and nobody bothered me sence. It's profitable to be wicked.

MARTHA [*distressed, but carefully putting on the dress*]. But ye been savin' it so long.

AUNTY. I won't have ye wearin' pry-eyes' shabby stuff, and my good silk crumblin' away in the grave.

AUNTY. Come here; I want to try on the bonnet. [*MARTHA sets it awkwardly on the back of her head.*] You make yerself look like a hen goin' to roost. Kneel down! [*MARTHA kneels and AUNTY pinches and pulls at the bonnet till it is becoming to MARTHA's gentle face.*]

AUNTY [*loosening MARTHA'S hair*]. Now ye're less like a drowned mouse. Stand off and let me see the dress.

[*MARTHA has already gained a new expression of self-confidence and stands smiling gently.*]

MARTHA. Don't it crackle grand?

AUNTY [*surveying it critically*]. It'll do well enough under the tippet. Miss Flossy can alter it for ye afterwards. [*Emphatically.*] Don't do it yerself; ye have about as much style as a canary. [*Gathering up the veil.*] Now, come back; I want to hang this. [*MARTHA gives her the bonnet and sits down beside her.*]

MARTHA. Let me hold the pins, Aunty.

AUNTY. Now, Martha, when I'm dead and gone don't hide away by yerself, but mingle with folk, and go to prayer-meetin', and have the sewin'-circle here.

MARTHA [*with a smile*]. That's strange advice from you, Aunty.

AUNTY. Yes, and open the front parlor, and give them some of my good old blackberry cordial to clacker over. If any of the men-folk join ye after meetin', ask 'em in, be real sociable, and give 'em some of yer good pie; but don't give away the receipts, Martha.

MARTHA. But why, Aunty?

AUNTY. It'll make the women talk about ye, and the men-folk'll soon catch on to what a good cook ye are. [*Draping the veil with great care.*] It's beginning to look real stylish. There, I've left just a little jet peepin' through. Now put it on and look at it.

[*MARTHA takes the lamp and stands in front of the mirror. She hardly recognizes herself and beams with delight at her altered image.*]

MARTHA. Miss Flossy herself couldn't hang it more mournful.

AUNTY [*surveying her work with great satisfaction*]. The Lord ought to give me an awful lot of credit for trimmin' ye a smart bonnet.

MARTHA [*distressed*]. It's strange ideas ye've been gettin' from the Lord.

AUNTY. It ain't strange. He should be rewardin' ye with a husband, is it?

MARTHA [*gasping and putting down the lamp as her hand trembles*]. A husband! Now I begin to understand. Do you think anyone would ever want to marry me?

AUNTY. Indeed, why else should I be expiatin' for my sins by tellin' ye how to catch some respectable, easy-goin' man.

MARTHA. And was that the revelation?

AUNTY. Certainly. The Lord sends strange messengers. It was pry-eyes set me on the road to salvation. [*Putting her hand into the stocking.*] Here's my garnet pin.

MARTHA. Uncle's weddin'-present!

AUNTY. Wear it to meetin' about a week after the funeral. It'll set the sewin'-circle agog, and they'll argue the properness of it back and forth, with the men on yer side, bein' born contrary. They'll be lookin' fer yer jewels by the next meetin'. Then tell 'em at some sewin'-circle how yer poor dear Aunty asked ye always to wear her pin. Let me put it on yer. [*MARTHA stoops down while it is pinned.*] Now put on the tippet and walk as if ye was comin' down the aisle.

[*MARTHA adjusts the tippet and moves slowly and solemnly across the room, almost stately in her flowing draperies, with a new look of tender dignity.*]

AUNTY. That's it; that's it. Give me a glass of water, Martha. [*MARTHA gives her a drink. She sips*

a little water and falls back wearily. MARTHA stoops over her anxiously.]

AUNTY [*feebly*]. Pray for me, Martha.

[*MARTHA kneels in prayer. There is a rapping at the door, but no one heeds it. Presently the neighbor pokes her head in and advances cautiously into the room, bearing a large box. She creeps up behind MARTHA, staring at her in astonishment. She studies the bonnet, feels the veil and fur, nodding her head approvingly. She notices the stocking and open jewel-case and puts out her hand to take them. AUNTY, who has been watching through half-closed eyes, suddenly sits up, shaking her fist and pouring out a stream of abuse. MARTHA rises and stands beside her.*]

AUNTY. You sly-footed, hypocritical, old barn-cat! Take your half-starved body out o' my house. Martha don't want none o' yer worthy Christian charity. She's got money o' her own and silks o' her own. Get out, get out, you slink-tailed old fox! [*She falls back exhausted. MARTHA kneels beside the sofa. The neighbor slinks out.*]

PAUL ERNST AND THE NEO-CLASSIC MOVEMENT IN GERMAN DRAMA

I

DRAMATIC theory and practice in Germany just before the war was in a somewhat chaotic condition; that is to say, no new forces had come sweeping all before them as did the Naturalistic movement of the eighties and nineties—the movement which, at least so far as German drama is concerned, was first effectively brought into being by the production of Gerhart Hauptmann's *Vor Sonnenaufgang* (Before Sunrise) in the year 1889. There had been no such continuous and lasting impulses as that, it is true. But this must not be taken to mean that the interest of the German people in drama had in any way declined. Probably no other European people had a greater interest in the acted play—and it is necessary to emphasize the word “acted,” for, as a well-known German dramatic critic once said to me, the German public has no desire to read plays until they have been successfully produced; the printed play which has not enjoyed that fortune receives very little attention; “it will”—this is his own phrase—“be given to the sports editor to review in his spare time. But a play which has been successful in the theatre will command a large public when it appears in book form.” In other words, the German public—unlike the English public, which reads Shaw's plays as a novel and those of W. B. Yeats as a volume of poems—has no esteem

for a play that will not act well. This fact will have an important bearing on the subject of this article.

The interest of the German public in the drama, then, had, when war opened, in no way declined. Nor have the efforts of the stage to meet that interest. *Hoftheaters* and *Stadttheaters* all over the country have had year by year a wonderful record of activity to present; night after night they produced the classics or the best of the modern plays, in many cases with extraordinary efficiency, in all cases with remarkable cheapness. The South German peasant may sit in a ninepenny seat and see Reinhardt's staging of *A Winter's Tale*, *Wallenstein*, Mr. Galsworthy's *Silver Box*, or, say, the Bavarian Ludwig Thoma's biting, satirical play *Moral* (recently published in English by Alfred Knopf); all these it was possible to see just before the war in a small municipal theatre incapable of seating more than six or seven hundred. And as for the large theatres—Berlin, Munich, Stuttgart, Dresden—these were continually attracting actor-managers from other countries, all anxious to study new methods of production, all eager to find out the secret of efficiency. Mr. Granville Barker's stay in Berlin, for instance, resulted in three new Shakespearian productions in London, which were at least novel and stimulating, even if they were not a complete success. In any case there was Germany as I knew it until the end of July, 1914—a model to Western Europe in the matter of the production of drama and of public enthusiasm for the drama.

With such keen and carefully fostered interest in the acted play it was unlikely that the playwrights would remain unaffected. And, as a matter of fact, the past few years, although they have witnessed no great, overwhelming movement, have yet been

marked by an immense fertility. Instead of the one great movement there have been very many smaller movements, one of which may possibly become predominant after the present war has ceased to interrupt the progress of culture. It will be necessary to glance at these various tendencies so as to be enabled to place in correct perspective the particular tendency which is my immediate interest here.

II

Classification is difficult where writers have been at once so prolific and so diverse. But by means of bold generalization some five or six main tendencies may be described. In the first place, Naturalism is not absolutely exhausted, in spite of the fact that Gerhart Hauptmann—always its chief representative in German drama—has for some years past occupied himself with the writing of novels and pseudo-classical plays. The tendency still continued for some time in the work of Fritz Stavenhagen, who wrote Low German dialect drama of some power, and, though to a less degree, in the plays of Emil Rosenow—a Social Democratic deputy in the Reichstag. But these two dramatists died in 1906 and 1904, respectively, leaving, so it seemed, no one among the contemporary dramatists able to carry on the Naturalistic tradition—except, perhaps, Karl Schönherr, whose tragedy, *Glaube und Heimat* (Faith and Home) is still one of the most successful plays in the repertoires of German theatres, at all events in the South and in Austria.* And that is practically all that is left, in quite modern times, of pure naturalism. The romantic reaction was the immediate consequence of

*Ludwig Thoma cannot, I think, be considered a naturalistic dramatist. In one play, *Magdalena*, he conforms to the tradition, but the bulk of his work is satirical.

naturalism even in Hauptmann himself and in his followers, Ernst Rosmer, for example. This tendency, however, is still strong, both in its hold on the public and in its attraction for the dramatist. Hauptmann's *Versunkene Glocke* (The Sunken Bell) and *Hannele's Himmelfahrt* (Hannele) seem to be more popular than his *Die Weber* (The Weaver) or *Ratten* (The Rats); Sudermann's themes are *vieux jeu*; and even Max Halbe, who may be described as a romantic dramatist with a few strains of realism, is considered old-fashioned; Ernst Rosmer is better remembered by her fairy-tale drama *Königskinder* (The King's Children) than by her numerous experiments in naturalism. These facts indicate the reaction of public opinion. The reaction of the dramatists is represented first by the plays of Hugo von Hofmannsthal and, above all perhaps, by the striking and recent success of Ernst Hardt, whose Tristan drama *Tantris der Narr* (Tantris the Fool), published in 1907, has secured two Schiller prizes and raised the enthusiasm for—and, incidentally, the opposition to—Romanticism to the highest pitch. There are many weaknesses in this important play, but it seems—or seemed; the war has scotched prophecies—likely that its poetic beauty and its wealth of romantic suggestion will cause it to keep its hold for some time over the public mind, thereby stimulating still more interest in the romantic drama.

After these two schools must be placed the solitary figure of Frank Wedekind, who is a law unto himself, equally the opponent of naturalism—he caricatured Hauptmann as long ago as 1890 in his play *Die Junge Welt* (The Young World)—and of romanticism, or, indeed, of almost every tendency in modern German literature. He is the one perfect rebel; and as long as he and his wife continue to tour Germany, acting

in his formless, eccentric, grotesque, but undeniably powerful plays, so long, I suppose, will he be one of the great figures of contemporary German drama. When he ceases to exert this immense personal influence it is probable that his works will lose a great part of their attraction. Still, he is undoubtedly one tendency, barren, but very important, in German drama of the past decade.

The most popular dramatic tendency in modern Germany, praised by the critics and favored by the theatregoing public, is unquestionably that represented by the two dramatists, Herbert Eulenberg and Wilhelm Schmidtbonn. The first received the Schiller prize in 1912 for his "love-drama" (*Liebesdrama*), *Belinde* and both writers in the same year shared the Peter Müller prize of Frankfort. Possibly this tendency ought to be classed with Romanticism, but the emphasis which its exponents placed on passion (*Leidenschaft*) and their excess of psychologizing—these things really entitle it to a separate place. *Belinde* is a tragedy with a romantic motive borrowed from *Enoch Arden*, worked out with a good deal of rather morbid psychology and much beauty of phrase. Schmidtbonn has a strain of naturalism alien to Eulenberg and, in two plays, *Der Graf von Gleichen* (The Count of Gleichen) and *Der Zorn des Achilles** (The Rage of Achilles) he is a neo-classicist, but in essentials he belongs to the same school as Eulenberg. This "passionate-psychology" tendency is at present the most promising tendency in German drama.

The score or so of other well-known German dramatists are, with one exception, not yet defined enough for us to be able to classify them with cer-

*This was the play which received the Peter Müller prize.

tainty. Lilienstein, Falckenberg, Freksa, Kyser, the historical dramatist Hans Gumpfenberg, Emil Ludwig, Otto Hinnerk, the so-called "Hebbelites" Otto Erler and Friedrich Bartels, who is also described as a neo-classicist—all these may one day rank in histories of literature as exponents of tendencies, but at present they are, for the most part, just individual dramatists of promise.

The one exception to which I have just referred is Paul Ernst, whose school is generally, and correctly, known as "neo-classic."

The impulse to neo-classicism came during the first seven or eight years of the present century, chiefly from three men who were critics first and creators afterwards—Samuel Lublinski, Wilhelm von Scholz and Paul Ernst. In the first named the critic has predominated. A book by him appeared in 1904 with the title *Die Bilanz der Moderne* (Modernism in the Balance). This is mainly an account of the various literary movements of Germany at the turn of the century—of Naturalism as represented by Arno Holz and Gerhart Hauptmann, of Symbolism as represented by Stefan Georg, of Neo-Romanticism and Impressionism. The most significant passages of the book are those which contain a mild, for the most part implied, censure of naturalism, and a plea for something wider and more universal. It is true that Lublinski sees this something wider and more universal in Nietzsche as regards ideas and in Hebbel as regards technique; but his protest was useful and important. He followed it up in 1908 with a far more thorough-going book of criticism entitled *Der Ausgang der Moderne* (Exit Modernism), but in the meantime, in 1905, Wilhelm von Scholz had stepped in with his *Gedanken zum Drama* (Thoughts on the Drama) and Paul Ernst had in 1905 published his

Weg zur Form (The Road to Form). These two books mark the definite beginning of a neo-classic movement in German drama; they were the theoretical forerunners of many practical experiments.

Scholz began his career as a lyric poet strongly influenced by Maeterlinck; his ambition was to be a "symbolist realist," in the phrase of Leo Greiner, another neo-classic. His play *Der Gast* (The Guest) and the beautiful volume of lyrics entitled *Der Spiegel* (The Mirror), which was published in 1902, are examples of this period. Later he felt the attraction of Hebbel and thence it was a short transition to the theories advanced in the *Gedanken*. These are summed up in a sentence near the beginning of the book:

"It is a mistake to assume that the action of a drama develops out of the hero's character. It develops out of his fate."

And a little farther on he emphasizes and elaborates his conception of tragedy as being always the representation of a struggle against destiny. Scholz's drama *Meroe*, which was published in the following year, is a thorough attempt to carry out these theories, even to the extent of making the place of action remote and imaginary, which, says Scholz, is always done in great drama. It was not a success and Scholz henceforward gave himself up chiefly to criticism, in which he has done valuable work, and to comedy—*Vertauschte Seelen* (Deluded Souls) is an example—in which he is not strong. And so he will remain the critic and advocate, rather than the practical exponent, of neo-classicism.

Paul Ernst has very vigorously filled both parts. And yet, as he justly complains in his book of essays, *Ein Credo*, published in 1912, he has received very

little recognition. The Dresden Hoftheater has consistently produced his plays and one or two writers, in particular Karl Scheffler, the well-known art critic, have urged his genuine claims to greater attention. But the fact remains that many well-read people in Germany, and, of course, still more abroad, have no very clear ideas as to who Paul Ernst is and what may be the dramatic principles for which he stands.

No better account of these principles could be found than that contained in *Der Weg zur Form*, which is one of the most important volumes of criticism in modern German literature, only equalled, perhaps, by Dehmel's *Betrachtungen über Kunst, Gott und die Welt* (Reflections on Art, God and the World).

Der Weg zur Form begins with a few interesting notes of autobiography, which it may be well to summarize. Paul Ernst, then, was born in 1866. After a university career, as a student of theology, he was brought into contact at Berlin with the Brothers Hart, who introduced him to the advanced society of critics and artists known as "Durch," of which Holz, Hauptmann, Bruno Wille, Mackay and Schlaf, among others, were members. At first Ernst followed the literary and political fashions prevailing among this coterie; he became a Social Democrat, published a volume of poems imitated from Holz and entitled *Polymeter*, took part in the momentous founding of the "Freie Bühne" and wrote one or two naturalistic plays, none of which is of any importance.

He then journeyed to Italy and discovered the "novella." This discovery marks the true beginning of his literary career; he now for the first time conceived some active interest in form; and the preface to his volume of translations called *Altitalienische*

Novellen (Old Italian novelle) should be read if only for the light it sheds on this all-important turning-point in his literary evolution.

In 1902 Ernst published a "novelle," *Die Prinzessin des Ostens* (The Eastern Princess), one of his best works in that form, and followed it up with a full-length novel, *Der Schmale Weg zum Glück* (The narrow road to happiness). But neither completely satisfied him; later he even spoke of the novel as being only "semi-art," lacking "Notwendigkeit, Zwang und Form" (necessity, compelling force and form). The true form, he was at length convinced, was the drama, and all the reflections on style which the "novella" had aroused in him bore fruit completely for the first time in the tragedy *Demetrios*. This was published in 1905; thereafter Ernst was to write only drama, with two exceptions—the novel *Die Selige Insel* (The Blessed Isle, 1909), which does not concern us here, and the two volumes of critical essays entitled *Ein Credo*.

Demetrios is a drama of a totally unexpected maturity; in fact, judging it from all points of view, I should be inclined to place it at the head of Ernst's works. Everyone knows the story, used by Schiller in a fragment and by Hebbel in a very nearly completed drama. Apart from the fact that Ernst places the scene in ancient Sparta instead of Russia—he was resolved to make the drama as classical as possible—there are important differences of method in all three dramatists. In Schiller, Demetrius, the slave who makes himself king, is finally dethroned and slain on his illegitimacy being proved—Schiller's Demetrius is the typical Schiller hero, strong, self-reliant and energetic. All this energy and strength, however, is undermined as soon as his illegitimacy is brought home to him; and the tragedy then begins.

The hero loses belief in himself and the rest of the play is progression to the inevitable dénouement. Hebbel's play contains much beautiful poetry*—some of his finest passages are in his *Demetrius*—but his conception of the hero's character is not quite satisfactory. Demetrius is rather too much the sport of fate; there is not enough struggle. Ernst's Demetrius, however, may be said to die fighting against the fate which decrees that the hero shall not be king. Before his illegitimacy is made known he realizes that, for him "the time is out of joint" and, such is his destiny, he is not appointed to set it right. And so he dies proclaiming that he is indeed a slave and with that almost triumphant piece of self-humiliation the drama closes. *Demetrius* we may call the best proportioned play Ernst ever wrote; its most obvious foundation is the careful study of Sophocles, who, for Ernst, at least at this period, was the greatest of all dramatists.

Ernst's next two plays, *Gold* and *Canossa*, he later declared to be in part failures, since he had come to the conclusion that historical subjects were not suitable for drama unless there were some element of fate about the hero. *Canossa* is less of a failure because the action—the struggle between Henry IV and Hildebrandt—has elements of human as distinct from historical interest, but neither play pleased him very much and he did not attempt the historical drama again.

Canossa, as Ernst remarks in *Ein Credo*, was, in fact, a transition to *Brunhild*. Of this play it may be remarked that Ernst has greatly strengthened it by selecting only one episode, not the whole Nibelungen story as is done by Hebbel in his great but rather un-

*Ernst is not wholly fair in calling it "decorative," which he does in an essay in *Ein Credo*.

wieldy trilogy. Ernst, in short, has produced an acting tragedy. *Ninon de l'Enclos*, his next play, was a tragedy in three acts, published together with a drama on the same subject by Ernst Hardt. A comparison between the two would reveal the essential differences between the romantic and the neo-classic conception of drama. The kernel of all Ernst's theories about tragedy will be found in an essay in *Der Weg zur Form* entitled *Däs Drama und die Moderne Weltanschauung*. He says, in effect, that *the content of tragedy must be the struggle between the will to integration and human necessities*. These words describe *Ninon de l'Enclos*; the opposition is between human nature and morality and it is worked out with little detail or realism but great attention to construction so that, in Ernst's hands, even this subject becomes adapted to a neo-classic drama.

Ernst's last play is *Ariadne auf Naxos*, to which *Ninon de l'Enclos* is a transition as *Canossa* was a transition to *Brunhild*. We may call it the logical conclusion of his neo-classic theorizings. Study of Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* and of the dramas of Aeschylus gradually led him to see in the Dionysiac drama the most perfect art form in which he could work. And so we have this kind of mystery or religious play with a chorus—the young man and the old man form this—long, moralizing speeches, often of great beauty, and a profound religious truth underlying all. This religious truth, I suppose, is that divine love—the love of Dionysus for Ariadne—does not depend on perfect merit. Theseus is the hero who aims at perfection; Ariadne is the sinner who, in spite of her sin, or rather because of it, wins the love of a god. Theseus himself sees this at the end; "Du musst mich lieben, Gott, denn ich bin schwach," he

says, and Dionysus, taking Ariadne with him in a blaze of light, utters the final words of the drama:

Yes, life is good and death is good,
And light is beautiful and darkness, too;
Suffering is good and so is joy;
God became man, men now are changed to gods;
Open thine eyes to see the glorious sun;
When thou hast done this, lo, salvation's thine."

Ernst himself, and many critics with him, consider *Ariadne* the summit of his achievement. And so it is, if it is judged by the ideals Ernst set out to reach. In the *Weg zur Form* he had said that no great drama was possible without some "absolute morality." He then advanced from morality to religion, from the Sophoclean tragedy to the primitive Dionysiac play which, so great is Ernst's restraint, falls far short, we feel, of what a Dionysiac play ought to be.

This last point, however, really sums up Ernst's technique. He is a master of the "line" in drama; there is very little color or brightness—in the tragedies and classical plays, that is. (I have not thought it worth while to make any reference to his very inferior comedies.) Ernst has a very genuine classical austerity; and that is the first reason why he is never likely to be popular. The second reason is that his plays are not good acting plays, at least on the modern stage. This, as I said in the remarks at the beginning, is a fatal flaw in a dramatist, especially in Germany.

And so Ernst will remain, I think, a dramatist to be read and admired in the study. *Demetrios*, parts of *Brunhild* and *Ariadne auf Naxos*—these must find favor with those who like restraint, austerity, form. And it is possible these virtues will have a good effect. The neo-classic ideals which Ernst so splendidly voiced in his *Weg zur Form*—these ideals may

one day be attained by a dramatist of greater adaptability than Ernst, perhaps by one of the younger neo-classicists who are already following his example. Ernst's criticism will endure, I think, as an admirable expression of a very necessary reaction against naturalism and, more than that, of a positive ideal of form in drama. The plays, I feel, are experiments and there is nothing immortal about experiments. But neo-classicism is young; it may well grow to a great and powerful movement if it can rid itself of a few persistent faults. And, if it does so grow, it, as well as German literature, will have Paul Ernst to thank as the man who did the chief pioneer work, both in theory and in practice. The neo-classicist movement in drama as it exists in Germany to-day is his work and his alone. That is no small praise.

ALEC W. G. RANDALL.

A SCHOOL OF SCENE DESIGN

Ten years ago stage managers were perfectly willing to have their plays produced in a room which consisted of a flat back drop (usually with a half van of curiously shaped furniture and a fountain or two painted on it), a table, a chair, and a fire-place—always a fire-place with its atrocious bric-a-brac and gilded cherubs. But a great change has come over the furnishing, decorating and lighting of the stage during the past few years; there has been a new note in decorative handling—the introduction of a beautiful sense of color, a greater simplicity of line and more appropriateness of small accessories. The scene painters of the old school are vanishing, for this modern stagecraft is driving these “children of nature into red flannels and the fear of hell.” In their place is entering the artist, the student of design, the authority on historical styles and periods and—thanks to H. Granville Barker, Sam Hume, Robert Edmond Jones, Maurice Browne and others—the daring creator of amazing combinations of lights and colors.

Although scene painting is fast becoming an art instead of a trade, there is only one art school in America giving a thorough and practical course in scene painting and design. That school is the Carnegie Institute of Technology at Pittsburgh. Here a rigid course of four years leads to the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Drama. The underlying idea of the school is this: the minor arts which enter into the work of the stage must be learned with the major

ones if the result is to be artistic work. So the school has set about teaching every related subject, giving its students the opportunity of specialization in dramatic composition, acting, stage management or scene design, and preparing them by severe training for practical as well as artistic success in their chosen fields.

During the first part of his course the student in scene design begins sketching, tracing, and model making. Along with this, he must take acting—this to learn the limitations of the stage and the possibility of portraying character through the use of scenery; with this technical work are given illustrated lectures on the history of costume, historic styles of furniture, the history of design, and the history of the theatre. During the second part of his course, the student begins his work in scene painting, first learning the handling of materials and then studying the more difficult problems of illusive scenery and stage decoration. Practical talks, with laboratory work in the theatre, are given on electricity, lighting and the care of scenery.

There are frequent public performances, and the making of scenery and costumes for these performances is considered as much a part of the exercise as the acting. Visiting actors, dramatists, and producers are called in from time to time to produce plays or to give lectures. The list of well known people who have come to the institute to give their aid includes Maude Adams, Mrs. Fiske, Julia Marlowe, Otis Skinner, E. H. Sothern, Padraic Colum, John Drew, B. Iden Payne, William Poel and many others. Among the plays recently produced may be mentioned certain works related to the study of scene design: the *Iphigenia in Tauris* and the *Hippolytus* of Euripides, Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*,

As You Like It and *A Winter's Tale*, Fletcher's *The Elder Brother*, Moliere's *Tartuffe* and *The Doctor in Spite of Himself*, and Sheridan's *The School for Scandal*. More than fifty plays have been produced during the last three years.

The theatre, or as it is called, the laboratory, has a seating capacity for four hundred and twenty persons. It is an oval room, paneled in carved white oak and finished in the natural color of the wood. The stage is fully equipped with loft and grid, trapped floor, and a complete switchboard with twenty-two dimmers and a modern installation of lights; for many productions special lighting arrangements are made and a projecting apron stage, built in sections and readily removable, occasionally takes the place of the conventional footlights. The stage itself is cut off by steel curtains from the auditorium and from the greenroom at the back.

The drop curtain is of old gold velour, and for all formal occasions, when scenery is not required, a cyclorama of gray velvet encircles the stage. The scene dock at present contains some thirty complete sets of scenery made by J. Woodman Thompson, instructor in stage scene design, and the students in scene painting. New scenery for current productions is continually created. The school owns a complete equipment of furniture representing various historic periods.

Above the greenroom are the dressing rooms, shower baths and the rooms of the costume collection. Connecting with these are the costume making rooms, the dye room, the model making room, and the scene studio, which is equipped with a counterbalance paint frame large enough for any drop used in the theatre. These rooms are in continual use during the preparation of productions and students at all stages of the

course in scene design are expected to join in the preparation of the mounting of plays.

This is but a brief sketch of the work now being carried on and of the equipment of the Drama School at the Carnegie Institute of Technology. It is as yet a new school and, like America, "its one tradition is its youthfulness." It is an endowed school of the theatre, a repertory theatre, a little theatre, and an experimental theatre all in one—"free to the people."

COLIN CAMPBELL CLEMENTS.

SPAIN'S GREAT CENTURY OF PAGEENTRY AND DRAMA



NO COUNTRY ever harbored three more brilliant dramatists than did Spain during the period of 1550-1650. These were Cervantes, Lope de Vega, and Calderon. Moreover, about these men were grouped many others, as dominating and picturesque personalities as could be found in any country of the world during that vivid era when life was all color and clash, military glory and dark intrigue.

The first of these, Cervantes, is undoubtedly the most universally known because of his satire *Don Quixote*. He was born in 1547 and died in the same year as Shakespeare, 1616. Thus these two masters may be remembered as living out their lives and enriching the world with their genius during the same period. In their common field of dramatic work, Cervantes ranked higher than is generally appreciated; he even rivalled the great Lope de Vega, especially in the earlier part of Lope's career. One of the most important of his dramas is *Los Tratos de Argel*, which, literally translated, is *The Life and Manners of Algiers*. This tragedy is not a cohesive work, being written in "episodical sketches." The material Cervantes obtained when, as a youth, he was captured by Algerian pirates and kept as a prisoner in Algiers for several years. Another of his plays, also a tragedy, is founded upon the sorry fate of the ancient city of Numantia in Spain. Von Schlegel, an

eminent authority in dramatic criticism, speaks of the *Numantia* as not only "one of the most distinguished efforts of the early Spanish theatre, but one of the most striking exhibitions of modern (as compared to ancient classic) poetry." Very dramatic in spirit and effect is the speech declaimed by Scipio (Africanus) when the last Numantian, Viriato, hurls himself from the tower:

O matchless action, worthy of the meed
Which old and valiant soldiers love to gain!
Thou hast achieved a glory by thy deed,
Not only for Numantia, but for Spain!
Thy valour strange, heroical in deed,
Hath robbed me of my rights, and made them vain;
For with thy fall thou hast upraised thy fame,
And levelled down thy victories to shame!
Oh! could Numantia gain what she hath lost,
I would rejoice, if but to see thee there!
For thou hast reaped the gain and honor most
Of this long siege, illustrious and rare!
Bear thou, O stripling, bear away the boast,
Enjoy the glory which the Heavens prepare,
For thou hast conquered by thy very fall,
Him who in rising falleth worst of all."*

But Lope De Vega was, of course, the greater dramatist of the two. By creating a national drama for his country, he earned Fitz-Maurice Kelly's remark that "what Shakespeare did for England, Lope did for Spain." By the ardent and imaginative Spaniard of the day he was called "The Phoenix of Spain." Lope died in 1635, nineteen years after Shakespeare. In his busy career he wrote a prodigious number of plays; Montalvan, his biographer, attributes to him about 1,800 dramatic works in all, both religious and secular.

It was at the command of the proud and haughty

*Gibson's translation of *Numantia*.

Duke Olivares that Lope wrote a number of his most brilliant and poetic dramas. These were ordered to please and flatter his master, King Phillip IV. It is said that the extravagance of the Duke knew no bounds, single entertainments costing him more than sixteen thousand ducats. In his history of Spanish literature, Ticknor gives a most interesting description of one of these fêtes. It was held in one of the gardens of Madrid and the occasion was the Eve of St. John. (The fêtes given by Lord Leicester for Queen Elizabeth were of the same character. Similarly Fouquet in 1661 at Vaux paid honor to Louis XIV by persuading him to write *Les Facheux* and other plays. In these days when pageants are being revived, it is interesting to perceive how general were the sumptuous revels of the early seventeenth century and how "advanced" their mechanical effects.) To quote from Mr. Ticknor, "The Marquis Juan Bautista Crescencio—the architect of the Pantheon of the Escorial—had charge of the architectural construction. This consisted of luxurious bowers for the king and his courtiers, and in front of them stood the gorgeous theatre, where, amidst a blaze of torch-lights, the most famous company of actors performed the play." Frolics on St. John's Eve were an ancient custom and frequent allusions to them are made in old Spanish stories and ballads. "The magnificent entertainment, of which the play of Lope was the crowning feature, was interspersed with music, dances and refreshments. It occupied the whole night from nine in the evening until daylight, when the royal party swept back with great pomp and circumstance to the palace, the stately form of Olivares following the king's coach in place of the accustomed servant."

A still more important fête occurred in 1620 when

Lope de Vega was given the prize for the play of *St. Isidore*, the titular saint of Madrid in whose honor the fête was given. "The Church where the bones of the saint reposed, called the Church of St. Andrew, was richly decorated. The merchants of the city completely encased its altars with silver, and goldsmiths enshrined the form of the saint in a sarcophagus of gold elaborately wrought. When St. Isidore was admitted to the "full glories of saintship," the festival lasted nine days. Lope de Vega himself describes with care the detail of the decoration of eight pyramids, seventy feet high, which were placed in different parts of Madrid. The finest houses were hung with gorgeous tapestries, and great religious processions in which the nobility took part swept through the streets. So many bull fights were given that two thousand bulls were slaughtered in the public squares and amphitheatre for the delectation of the people. The play of *St. Isidore* was, of course, of a religious character; at that time the drama still received the sanction of the church. It was "acted on an open, movable stage before the king, court and the assembled multitudes, making the author the most prominent figure of a festival which, if rightly understood, goes far to explain the spirit of the times and the religion on which it all depended."* The festival was also a poetic joust where many competed for the honors. Among Lope's competitors present were Montalvan, his biographer, and Calderon. The former, a close friend of de Vega's was a dramatist of considerable merit, his *Lovers of Teruel* being well known in Spain; "as faithful as the lovers of Teruel" is a common expression.

In the Spanish drama of this period, Lope de Vega

*Ticknor.

is to be considered as the most important writer. He was more popular and successful than any who had come before him and he was the greatest directing factor in making the drama of his country national. To him we owe the development of the "gracioso," an essentially Spanish characterization. In some senses this creation is a "buffoon" such as we have seen in Figaro, in the Barber of Seville and in Lazarillo of the *Lazarillo de Tormes*—the first *pícaro*. As a rule the "gracioso" is a servant of broad and coarse wit who mimics and parodies his master to the mirth and enjoyment of the "mosqueteros," the people in the pit.

After the death of Lope, Calderon in turn became the favorite of the Duke Olivares, for whom he wrote many plays, enjoying till his death the Duke's friendship and patronage. Calderon was considered in some ways a greater dramatist than Lope de Vega, though, as Kelly pertinently says, "without Lope we should have had no Calderon." The most magnificent of the entertainments or plays prepared by Calderon for Olivares was *Love The Greatest Enchantment*. This was given upon a floating theatre in the gardens of El Buen Retiro, still known in Madrid by the same name.

Leo Dietrichstein's recent unsuccessful attempt to give us *The Judge of Zalamea* by Calderon, unsuccessful both in atmosphere and in box office receipts, is one of the few opportunities Americans have had to approach at all intimately in the play-house this great drama epoch.

In the first part of *Don Quixote*, Cervantes, through the mouths of his characters, says so much about the drama that it is easy to see what a hold it had taken even then on the people of Spain. In the year 1632 in Castile alone there were seventy-six

dramatists. Between 1550 and 1650, therefore, we may regard the theatre as universally popular as it is now. In that century it became in Spain more truly national than in any other country since the period of the classical drama in Greece. In fact, the passion for drama was so great that even the Spanish captives on the coast of Barbary—both at Tunis and Algiers, in the vast Baños or baths, which were their prison houses at night—solaced themselves with acting and seeing acted the plays of the day. Among them at one time, as we have said, was the celebrated Cervantes himself. It seemed “as if everybody from tailors to princes wrote plays in those days, on all subjects, from Scriptural scenes to adventures of their own.” Do we ever have a great national art in any form until that form has general acclaim both in hearts and in the activities of all the people?

Then, as now, the popular taste was for play-acting, and who can say we have progressed far in the quality of the plays? The point of view and the subject-matter may have changed, but what standard have we to prove that they were so much worse than now? Was the public taste then inferior to that of the present day? If so, how and in what way? If the public then preferred to be amused with plays which dealt largely with the intervention of the supernatural in the affairs of men, was it the less interesting? Take Calderon’s *El Magico Prodigioso* for example, which filled the poet Shelley with “inexpressible wonder and delight.” The following is a quotation from the translation by Shelley of the famous speech of the Spirit in replying to Cyprian’s question, “Who art thou, and when comest thou?”

Since thou desirest, I will then unveil
Myself to thee;—for in myself I am

A world of happiness and misery;
This I have lost, and that I must lament
Forever. In my attributes I have stood
So high and so heroically great,
In lineage so supreme, and with a genius
Which penetrated with a glance the world
Beneath my feet, that was by my high merit.
A King—whom I may call the King of kings,
Because all others tremble in their pride
Before the terrors of his countenance—
In his high palace roofed with the brightest gems
Of living light—call them the stars of heaven—
Named me his counsellor. But the high praise
Stung me with pride and envy, and I rose
In mighty competition, to ascend
His seat, and place my foot triumphantly
Upon his subject thrones. Chastised, I know
The depth to which ambition falls: too mad
Was the attempt, and yet more mad were now
Repentance of the irrevocable deed;
Therefore I close this ruin with the glory
Of not to be subdued, before the shame
Of reconciling me with him who reigns
By coward cession. Nor was I alone,
Nor am I now, nor shall I be alone;
And there was hope, and there may still be hope,
For many suffrages among his vassals
Hailed me their lord and King, and many still
Are mine, and many more shall be.
Thus vanquished, though in fact victorious,
I left his seat of empire.

Is there anything in the modern play so splendid as this bit? Yet it was *the people* in those days, not merely the nobility who were fed by such poetry. Whatever one may find in the drama of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it was less coarse and suggestive than the larger majority of the plays we have today. Coarse they may have been, but with the coarseness and the horse-play of the rude peasant, perfectly sound and moral at heart. In the *capa y espada* plays of Lope de Vega the immorality is so

open and above board, as for instance in the plots of intrigue between lovers and married women, that it does not shock one as does the subtly insidious "eternal triangle." They had, to be sure, in those days, an exaggerated "point of honor"; there was also a great deal of sword-play and the buncombe peculiar to the age of chivalry; but the plays contained a rich beauty, a poetry not alone from the picturesque and spectacular, which we sometimes long for today while we gorge ourselves on the psychological drama.

ISABEL S. SHEPARD.

ANOTHER PHASE OF HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA



THREE years ago the writer organized a society of juniors and seniors in the Trenton High School with the idea of interesting them in the study of such literature as is not generally included in the regular curriculum. The society was open only to honor students in English, and was limited to thirty members. An organization was effected, with officers, a constitution, and dues. It met fortnightly in the evenings at the homes of the members.

The immediate choice was the drama, and the first year was spent in the study of the Greek drama, early English plays, and such plays of Shakespeare as were not read in school. The students took assignments willingly, and spent considerable time in reading up the plays and critical matter for reports before the society.

The second year sufficient copies of Brander Matthews' "Chief European Dramatists" were secured so that all could either read most of the plays, or listen to individual reports on the others. The membership was increased to forty members, and a waiting list established. It was found that most of the members, to judge from their oral reading, possessed sufficient dramatic ability to demonstrate the fruits of their work before the school; therefore the society decided to present a one-act play in the school auditorium each month during the winter. The plays given in the order named were the following: *Anti-*

gone, Sophocles; *The Twins*, Plautus; *The Doctor in Spite of Himself*, Moliere; *Everyman*.

The plays were given in costume, but on a bare stage with only the necessary properties. Each play was prefaced by a short talk explaining to the school such historical and dramatic matter as would make the interpretation clear. The talks were given by teachers in the classics and modern language departments. It is obvious that the society wanted to give the school not only evidence of its study, but to acquaint it with at least a brief outline of the development of the drama from earliest times up to primitive English conditions. The close attention and interested comment of the school was ample proof that the experiment was a success.

The work of the present year is more ambitious. The society now numbers fifty members, the dues have been increased, and the plan of work has been considerably widened. In the first place, they have joined the Drama League, have subscribed to THE DRAMA, and have already begun study of the plays listed in the courses outlined in the September and October issues of the *Drama League Monthly*, using the texts found in Thomas H. Dickinson's *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*. In addition to this work, which will be done at the fortnightly meetings, fortnightly after-school meetings are being held, the distinct purpose of which is to make a special study of Chatfield-Taylor's course in the "Commedia Dell'Arte," as published by the Drama League. Besides, the society is writing a one-act play for production before the school in the spring. The director stated that plots must be submitted which would represent some investigation of literary, historical, or legendary fields. In consequence, the students are devising plots from such material as *Sir Gawain and the*

Green Knight, *Judith Shakespeare*, the stories of Paul Heyse, *Peter Schlemihl*, the *Mabinogian*, the *Song of Roland*, and Norse legend. At one meeting the best plot will be chosen, after discussion; at the next, the best scenario from the plot will be chosen. In this way the play will be written, a composite product.

The plan of producing plays before the school will be continued. The society gave in December Stuart Walker's Christmas pantomime, *The Seven Gifts*, and it has in rehearsal a dramatization of the Book of Job. After that it will present Lady Gregory's *Coats*, and Yeats' *The Hour Glass*, concluding the course with the play written by the members. It is obvious that the aim this year is to present types of the drama rather than to follow an historical outline.

The society now has a fair stage equipment, thanks to the receipts of the senior play—another annual institution. The set comprises a series of decorative panels, curtains, and drop, somewhat on the style of the Portmanteau Theatre, and sufficient lighting apparatus. The beginnings of a good costume wardrobe have been made.

A word as to theatre attendance must be said. The director is always at the disposal of the society or of any group that cares to attend a good play *en masse*. It has not been possible to organize this work, but as occasion offers, many profitable hours have been spent in the theatre.

The *Belles Lettres Society* claims no special distinction: it is merely trying to make work in the drama cogent and interesting; to make the drama as an art significant to boys and girls of high school age. So far it believes it has been successful.

J. MILNOR DOREY.

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THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review Devoted to the Play and
the Theatre

May, 1918

THE DRAMA

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

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THE DRAMA is making every effort to stimulate the writing and producing of worthy American plays. Toward this aim it publishes regularly plays by younger writers which are especially suitable for amateur use. In no other magazine can so much material be found of value to the associations eager for fresh, worthy drama. In return for this service, the magazine asks its readers first to be zealous in the payment of the small royalties which are requested by the playwright and which represent his final payment for his work, and second to suggest other plays which they desire to see made accessible through the pages of THE DRAMA.

A Quarterly Review Devoted to the Drama

1918

OF THE contemporary dramatic writers of Hungary only three men have achieved a foreign reputation, Molnar, Lengyel, and Biro. The former two have had their day on the American stage and the third received a hearing when his play *Catherine of Russia*, written in collaboration with Lengyel, was produced recently in New York. Molnar and Lengyel have been known through their Broadway successes, *The Devil*, *The Phantom Rival*, and *The Typhoon*.

The modern Magyar school of dramatic literature is a by-product of Vienna; it contains all the essence of Schnitzler, Bahr and Rhoda Rhoda. It is the light, witty, cosmopolitan entertainment of the *Weltmensch*, and because it is cosmopolitan and not nationalistic it has a universal appeal. Its foundation is oriental, as its chief exponents are of Jewish descent, and though it may strive for nationalistic effects, its origin may easily be detected. The craze for magyarisation of all the German and Slav names in Hungary is responsible for some confusion, but even a superficial examination of the character of the literary works produced, coupled with the true Austrian names of their authors easily reveals them

as the children of the cafes of the Blue Danube and the Prater.

Lajos Biro was born in Vienna in 1880, brought up in a little Hungarian village and later studied for the bar in Budapest. He left the law and tried banking for two years, and finally turned to journalism and literature. For a short time he helped to edit a small radical publication but soon left for the Sorbonne and the Latin Quarter. When he returned he became the editor of a daily newspaper and began to publish many short stories in *feuilleton* form. The best of these were brought out later in book form under the title *Iconoclasts*. After serving in the army for a time, he became a correspondent of a large Budapest daily in Berlin and while there wrote his first play *Familienherd*. It was successfully produced at the Freie Bühne in Berlin and elsewhere.

A year later Biro's longer play called *The Yellow Lily* was produced. As it satirized the aristocracy, its performance was forbidden by the authorities. The producer tried an adaptation by making the Grand Duke a Russian, but the reference to local characters was too obvious. His other plays *Reuber Ritter* and *Catherine* have both been recently acquired by American producers. *Reuber Ritter* was produced in German at the Irving Place Theatre some years ago.

The two one-act plays given here are of a series forming an evening's entertainment under the title *The Home Circle*. They were produced at the Freie Bühne in Berlin and were well received. The cycle embraces three plays: *The Bridegroom*, in which the family hypocrisy is the accepted virtue,—an old theme treated from a new angle; *The Grandmother*, in which an old scandal is brought to light; and the third, *The Choice of a Profession*, which is too true

and too bold for puritan ears. Its theme, humorously treated, argues that a prostitute may be a good daughter, steadfast church-goer, and, by the same token, an honest woman.

Biro is at the present time war correspondent of the *Pester Lloyd*. He has written two war plays which remain in manuscript; one, *On the Road to Lemberg*, is a war melodrama of the Secret Service type, while the other, written in 1916, is an anti-war drama.

Biro's short stories and articles dealing with secularism and kindred subjects are numerous. He has an easy journalistic style and a cosmopolitan conception which makes his writings popular in a country where the seventy-five per cent population of foreigners want to be Magyars and the twenty-five per cent of real Magyars are singing unwritten songs in the *pusztas* and the hills and wishing they were foreigners.

CHARLES RECHT.

THE BRIDEGROOM AND THE GRANDMOTHER

By Lajos Biro; authorized translation into English
By Charles Recht*

CHARACTERS

THE BRIDE

THE FATHER

THE MOTHER

ONE OF THE SISTERS

ANOTHER SISTER

THE OLDEST BROTHER

THE THIN AUNT

THE STOUT AUNT

THE POOR RELATIVE (The Stout Aunt's husband)

A PHYSICIAN

THE IRRATIONAL BARON

* All rights reserved by Charles Recht and John Biro, 110 West 40th St., New York.

THE BRIDEGROOM

Just one bit of comment about the poor relative; and about him only this much. He is in no sense a parasite. He doesn't belong to the tribe of the submerged tenth; on the contrary, he isn't even poor,—he is only, so to speak, constantly embarrassed in his intercourse with his wealthier relatives. He feels that the gods have favored him in giving him the entree into these happier circles. He is charmed and enthusiastic, and struggles anxiously and painstakingly to confirm their favorable opinion. He drinks in their words,—he even snatches them before they have been fully uttered, and he hurries his assent so quickly that his words form a continuous stuttering,—a constant monotonous murmuring.

The irrational baron is, of course, called irrational merely because he is very rational. His soul is the survivor of those barbaric, chivalrous, self-sacrificing knights whom humanity pensioned off long ago.

The oldest brother is the heir, though his estate does not consist of a castle and acres, but of a business house and ledger accounts.

[The two sisters are arranging the bridal gifts on a table. THE BRIDE leans out of the window toward the street, waving greetings.]

BRIDE. Good-by, sweetheart . . . good-by, my dear, my darling.

[Frightened, she peers out anxiously.]

Carl, for God's sake!

[In despair.]

Carl!

[*She screams.*]

Carl!

[*With a piercing shriek, she staggers back and falls.*]

BOTH SISTERS. Renee, Renee! For God's sake, Renee, what's wrong with you? What's happened?

ONE OF THE SISTERS. Help, quick, help!

THE OTHER. Papa, papa, mama!

ONE OF THE SISTERS. Help, Alfred!

[THE FATHER, MOTHER, OLDEST BROTHER and both aunts rush in.]

FATHER. What's happened?

MOTHER. Great Heavens, who tripped Renee?

ONE OF THE SISTERS. She was looking out of the window and waving good-by to Carl.

THE OTHER SISTER. Then suddenly she cried out and fainted.

FATHER. Where has Carl gone?

THE OLDEST BROTHER. To meet the baron. We were waiting only for him.

THE STOUT AUNT. Hans went with him. I saw Uncle Hans go downstairs with him.

[THE POOR RELATIVE appears on the threshold, all upset, hatless, and wiping the perspiration from his forehead.]

THE STOUT AUNT [*with a shriek peculiar to marital affection*]. Hans, Hans, has anything happened to you?

[THE POOR RELATIVE, still trying to get his breath, shakes his head.]

FATHER. What's wrong with Carl? Where is Carl? What's happened to him?

[THE POOR RELATIVE gasps for breath.]

FATHER [*with the imperiousness of a Cæsar*]. What's—happened—to—Carl?

THE POOR RELATIVE. Terrible! Awful! . . . He went to meet the baron. . . . I accompanied him. . . . I went with him. . . .

FATHER. But tell us finally what's happened to him.

THE POOR RELATIVE. He started to cross the street, he turned to look at this window, was waving greetings. . . . He didn't see an automobile approaching . . . wanted to jump to the side . . . but he was run over.

MOTHER. God! God!

[*She bursts into sobs. This is a signal for the two sisters to begin to sob. The two aunts make awful faces.*]

FATHER. A doctor, quick—run for a doctor! Did you ask someone to get a doctor?

THE POOR RELATIVE. Yes, we got one from the street.

THE OLDEST BROTHER. But where is Carl? Where did they take him?

THE POOR RELATIVE. Down in the janitor's flat.

FATHER. To the janitor's? I'm going to have him brought right up here.

THE OLDEST BROTHER. Father, you stay here. I'll take care of that. Your place is with your family.

FATHER. A doctor from the street! Call a specialist! Two specialists!

THE OLDEST BROTHER. I'll look after everything. If possible I'll bring him up. Is he badly hurt?

THE POOR RELATIVE. I don't know. . . . I believe so. . . . Very likely. . . .

THE OLDEST BROTHER. I'll hurry. You'll soon know about it.

[*He goes out.*]

FATHER. Did he faint?

THE POOR RELATIVE. I believe so. I don't know.

FATHER. Didn't you look at him?

THE POOR RELATIVE. Certainly.

FATHER [*cross-examining him*]. Did he faint? Answer yes or no.

THE POOR RELATIVE [*frightened*]. Yes . . . he fainted . . . that is, I don't know exactly. If you think so . . .

FATHER. But he will soon recover?

THE POOR RELATIVE [*agreeing with all enthusiasm*]. Certainly . . . I hope so . . . soon . . . very soon . . .

MOTHER. [*She has been busying herself about the prostrate daughter and is surrounded by the other women.*] The waist . . . open the waist . . . take her corset off.

THE STOUT AUNT. Rub her forehead with vinegar.

THE THIN AUNT. Vinegar is no good.

ONE OF THE SISTERS. Let's put her to bed.

MOTHER. Yes, to bed.

THE THIN AUNT. Haven't you any sense? I often fainted but they never put me to bed.

FATHER [*imperiously*]. Put her to bed!

[*The women carry THE BRIDE out of the room.*]

FATHER. Let's hope that to-morrow the wedding need not be postponed.

THE POOR RELATIVE [*agreeing eagerly*]. Quite likely. Quite likely. Why should it not be possible . . . yes, possible?

FATHER. The ceremony can take place in the house. Carl can sit in an arm-chair.

THE POOR RELATIVE [*agreeing and demonstrating his contempt of death*]. In an arm-chair . . . excellent . . . in an arm-chair . . . he can sit in an arm-chair . . .

[THE OLDEST BROTHER *with a tragic expression appears on the threshold.*]

FATHER. Well, how is it? Will he recover soon?

[THE OLDEST BROTHER *shakes his head dismally.*]

FATHER. No? No, you say? What does that mean? Will there be no wedding to-morrow?

[THE OLDEST BROTHER *shakes his head and assumes a dramatic mien.*]

FATHER. Will he be sick a long time?

[THE OLDEST BROTHER *nods resignedly.*]

FATHER. But he will recover?

[THE OLDEST BROTHER *shakes his head.*]

FATHER. Will he die?

THE OLDEST BROTHER. He has two or three minutes . . .

FATHER. Impossible . . . no, no, no . . . that's impossible . . . that must not happen, you must be mistaken.

THE OLDEST BROTHER. The doctor is coming up. Here he is.

[THE DOCTOR *appears on the threshold. He is serious and respectful.*]

FATHER. Is it true? Doctor, is it true?

DOCTOR. Alas, it is all over.

FATHER. But there must still be some hope. A specialist quick! A specialist can surely help him.

DOCTOR. You can call a specialist . . .

FATHER. We can, of course we can, can't we?

DOCTOR. But no specialist in the world can cure the dead.

FATHER [*shocked*]. Is he dead?

DOCTOR. He died a minute ago.

FATHER. A minute ago.

DOCTOR. He died of a fractured skull and concussion of the brain. The Medical Science with all her Latin words can do nothing more for him.

FATHER. But how could it have happened? How can such things be possible?

DOCTOR [*sympathetically*]. My task, unfortunately, is finished. [*He bows slightly and is about to depart.*]

ONE OF THE SISTERS. [*She rushes in.*] . . . The doctor . . . the doctor . . . Renee is still unconscious.

FATHER. Quite true. God, God! Doctor . . . if you please, Doctor!

DOCTOR. You wish me to examine the patient?

FATHER. Please do. I'll settle with you later.

DOCTOR [*annoyed*]. Very well. [*He goes out with one of the sisters.*]

FATHER. How terrible. What an unheard of misfortune!

THE OLDEST BROTHER. The Baron has just come. I heard his cab pull up.

FATHER. What a fatal day!

[*THE IRRATIONAL BARON enters much excited.*]

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. What have I heard . . . What a misfortune . . . How's Carl? Where is he? Is he very ill?

FATHER. My dear Baron, it is all over.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. All over? Will he die?

FATHER. He's dead.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. Where is he?

THE OLDEST BROTHER [*introducing himself*]. Alfred Tureczi, lieutenant in reserve of his Majesty's Huzzars.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON [*nodding in recognition*].

THE OLDEST BROTHER. He is lying in the janitor's flat. He was carried there after the accident.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. Dead?

THE OLDEST BROTHER. Dead.

[*The women, with the exception of THE MOTHER, come in.*]

ONE OF THE SISTERS [*falling around THE FATHER'S neck*]. Oh, papa, papa, papa!

THE OTHER SISTER [*embracing the father*]. Papa, papa, papa!

FATHER. Poor Renee, poor Renee!

[*The women wipe their eyes.*]

FATHER. How is our poor Renee? Does she know yet?

THE STOUT AUNT. She is still unconscious. The doctor told us to go out.

ONE OF THE SISTERS. He told only mama to stay.

THE STOUT AUNT [*sobbing*]. Poor Renee!

[*All the women are weeping.*]

THE IRRATIONAL BARON [*speaking to THE FATHER*]. Terrible! A terrible catastrophe.

FATHER. Terrible.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. On the eve of his wedding.

FATHER. Yes, on the eve of his wedding. And everything was ready, and such a lot of wedding presents and the entire family was invited, even you, my dear baron, even you. And now this misfortune happens.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. When his young life was about to blossom . . . the poor bride . . .

FATHER [*sobbing*]. Poor Renee!

[*All the women are weeping again.*]

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. And you, my poor brave big boy. My poor, poor Carlo.

ONE OF THE SISTERS [*moaning*]. Poor Carlo!

FATHER. My dear Baron, you loved him.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. I loved him more than anyone in the world! With my heart and soul! He

was my only friend! He was like a son or brother to me!

FATHER. We all loved him so much.

THE OLDEST BROTHER [*crying*]. We all loved him so much.

THE STOUT AUNT. We all loved him, all of us.

FATHER. He was one of the best men in the world.

ONE OF THE SISTERS. And so charming.

THE OTHER SISTER. And so handsome.

THE STOUT AUNT. He was a gentleman.

THE THIN AUNT. And rich.

FATHER. And he was so well-informed.

ONE OF THE SISTERS. And he could play the violin so beautifully.

THE OTHER SISTER. And he played football on the 'Varsity.

THE STOUT AUNT. And he was so gentle to every one of us.

THE POOR RELATIVE. Gentle, yes, he was gentle. . . . He invited me to accompany him to meet the Baron.

FATHER. And he was always so attentive.

ONE OF THE SISTERS. He always brought us flowers.

THE OTHER SISTER [*sobbing*]. And candy.

FATHER. And how they two were attached to each other! How they loved each other!

THE STOUT AUNT. They were together all the time. You couldn't separate the two. They sat or stood together holding hands by the hour.

ONE OF THE SISTERS [*sobbing, but still charmed with the memory of it*]. They — were — kissing — each — other — all — the — time — and — everywhere.

[THE OTHER SISTER *sobs, but with ecstasy*].

THE STOUT AUNT. He would have made a model husband. He never contradicted women.

THE THIN AUNT. Perhaps it was all too fortunate.

ONE OF THE SISTERS. How happy they were!

THE OTHER SISTER. How happy we all were!

FATHER. I could hardly wait to rock the first little grandchild in my arms.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. Poor Carlos.

THE STOUT AUNT. He was a perfect man.

THE OTHER SISTER. A gentleman from his head to his heels.

FATHER. He would have been my son. I loved him more than my own child.

ONE OF THE SISTERS. I loved him more than my own brother.

THE STOUT AUNT. We loved him best of all the family.

FATHER [*sobbing*]. My dear Baron, we all loved him so.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON [*sighing*]. My poor Carlos. [*The loud wailing irritates THE BARON.*] I'm going down to him. Can I see him?

THE OLDEST BROTHER. I'll go down with you, my dear Baron.

[THE IRRATIONAL BARON, *downcast*, goes out. THE OLDEST BROTHER *follows him.*]

FATHER. What a gruesome, fatal day. What a catastrophe. What are we going to do with all these wedding presents? Even the spare room is full of them.

THE STOUT AUNT. You'll keep the presents, anyhow.

THE THIN AUNT. You must send all the presents back.

THE STOUT AUNT. You can't send them back. You aren't going to insult people.

THE THIN AUNT. The presents were meant for a wedding.

THE STOUT AUNT. Good; let them stay here until there is a wedding. Renee is going to get married some day.

FATHER. Marry! God only knows when. They loved each other so. That makes it worse than if she were only a widow. That reminds me that we have to cancel the order for the wedding dinner.

[THE OLDEST BROTHER *comes in.*]

FATHER. Where is the Baron?

THE OLDEST BROTHER. He wanted to remain alone with the dead.

FATHER. Yes, and what are we going to do with the body? Shall we have him brought up here? Will he be buried from here?

THE THIN AUNT. No, no, no. Don't you bring him up here.

THE STOUT AUNT. Wasn't he one of the family?

THE OLDEST BROTHER. We'll arrange that later. Don't profane sorrow with such discussions. How's Renee?

FATHER. Good God, yes! How's Renee? What's wrong with her?

ONE OF THE SISTERS [*opening the door into the next room and looking in*]. The Doctor is speaking to Mama. He'll be here presently.

[THE DOCTOR *comes in.*]

FATHER. How is she? How is she, Doctor? Nothing serious, I hope.

DOCTOR. Fortunately, it is not. She is now completely out of danger. She is conscious, but she is still a little weak.

FATHER. Thank God!

THE GIRLS. Thank God!!

THE STOUT AUNT [*pathetically*]. Thank God!

THE THIN AUNT. I told you!

DOCTOR [*speaking to THE FATHER*]. I would like to have a few confidential words with you, sir.

FATHER. With me?

DOCTOR. Yes.

FATHER. At your service.

DOCTOR. But this is confidential.

FATHER [*excited*]. Go out all of you! Get right out! [*The others go out.*] May my son remain, my oldest son?

DOCTOR. Yes, he may remain.

FATHER. What is it? Anything serious, Doctor?

DOCTOR. Oh no, nothing serious. Considering all the circumstances, the patient is entirely normal.

[THE OLDEST BROTHER *quivers all over.*]

DOCTOR. Nevertheless, as I said, the patient requires the kind of quiet care and nursing which every young mother needs.

FATHER [*stammering*]. All mothers . . . mothers . . . you don't mean that . . .

DOCTOR. On the condition and care of the patient two lives are now depending.

FATHER. No, no; that's impossible! You must be mistaken!

DOCTOR. It's important that during the next six months she should be free from all mental exertion and should have a perfect rest.

FATHER. That's a silly joke. What you are saying is a mistake. It's impossible, I tell you.

DOCTOR. A mistake is out of the question. When the patient recovered consciousness I spoke to her and she herself confirmed my suppositions.

FATHER. Impossible, impossible. . . . [*Racing up and down.*] Impossible. [*Calling.*] Cecilia!

Cecilia! [*Wildly excited.*] Cecilia, where the devil are you? Cecilia! [*He rushes out.*]

DOCTOR [*addressing THE OLDEST BROTHER*]. What I enjoined your father, I would strongly recommend to you.

THE OLDEST BROTHER. Then it is really true?

DOCTOR. Yes; now I will have to go.

THE OLDEST BROTHER. As the oldest son, I would beg you, Doctor, that you consider this affair as wholly confidential.

DOCTOR. You need not ask it, my boy. My profession demands that I keep professional secrets.

THE OLDEST BROTHER. Oh yes, pardon me. . . .

DOCTOR. Goodby. [*He leaves.*]

THE OLDEST BROTHER. Good . . . B—. [*Perplexed, he stares pensively into space.*]

FATHER [*rushing in*]. Where is Mama? Where did she go? [*He goes out through other door.*]

THE OLDEST BROTHER. Papa, papa, calm yourself. [*He rushes out after him.*]

THE STOUT AUNT [*rushing in*]. Alfred. [*Seeing no one in the room, she is about to leave.*]

THE THIN AUNT. [*She comes hurrying in.*] What has happened? Why are you carrying on? The whole house seems to have gone mad.

[THE STOUT AUNT *clasps her hands and bows her head.*]

THE THIN AUNT. What's happened? You were with Renee—what's happened to her?

[THE STOUT AUNT, *horrified, remains silent.*]

THE THIN AUNT [*out of temper, very impatient*]. What has happened?

[THE STOUT AUNT *draws her head toward THE THIN AUNT'S mouth, looks carefully about, shakes her head with evident horror and whispers into her ear.*]

THE THIN AUNT *listens with amazement. When the*

narrative evidently reaches its most delicate point, she begins to grin with satisfaction, then her malignant joy gives place to indignation. The Aunts face each other, puzzled and speechless, and make a face as though they meant to say, "You can expect almost anything to happen in this house."']

THE THIN AUNT [*pointing to the next room*]. And what do they think of it?

THE STOUT AUNT. I have not heard yet.

THE THIN AUNT. Come, let us find out.

BOTH SISTERS [*rushing in*]. Mama, Mama!

[*They remain standing and stare at each other, embarrassed and silent.*]

FATHER. [*He rushes in.*] Cecilia! Cecilia!! [*To the two girls.*] Where did your mother hide?

[*The Sisters, perplexed, do not answer him. THE MOTHER comes in at opposite door. She has been crying and is drying her tears with a handkerchief.*]

FATHER. Where the deuce were you? Why did you hide from me?

MOTHER. I was . . .

FATHER [*imperiously*]. Cecilia, woman, how did you allow this to happen?

[*THE MOTHER weeps gently.*]

FATHER. How could you be so careless? . . . Is this the protection you give your daughters? . . .

[*The Aunts, THE POOR RELATIVE and THE OLDEST BROTHER, all greatly interested, come in through different doors.*]

FATHER. You were a nice sort of mother!

MOTHER. Forgive—

FATHER. That is the way you take responsibility for your daughters!

MOTHER. But she was a bride.

FATHER. Certainly she was . . . a bride . . . yes. But does that make allowances for everything? . . . Now see what it leads to.

MOTHER. But how could I suspect . . .

FATHER. A careful mother suspects everything. You should never have permitted them to be alone. You should have followed their footsteps all the time!

MOTHER. The wedding was to be to-morrow.

FATHER. Was to be. But it will not be. . . . And now we, you have . . . you have her on your hands for good . . . this daughter of yours . . . this wretched . . .

MOTHER. Don't insult Renee!

FATHER. No? Don't insult her? Perhaps I shall even thank her for this! For this disgrace which she has brought on my home! For the dishonor which she has attached to my name! From this day on she is my child no longer!

ONE OF THE SISTERS [*sobbing*]. Renee is not to blame.

FATHER. Who else is to blame? Perhaps I am. . . . And besides, who gave you the right to chatter? What are you both doing here? Clear out!

THE OTHER SISTER [*sobbing*]. Poor Renee!

FATHER. How dare you interfere here? Leave at once. Go to your rooms. Clear out—out, I say.

[*Both girls leave.*]

MOTHER. Renee is not to blame.

FATHER. Who then, who then, who then?

MOTHER [*weeping with a drawling wail*]. Carl . . .

FATHER. Carl?

MOTHER. We trusted him blindly. He alone is to blame.

FATHER. He alone? . . .

MOTHER. Renee was so inexperienced. . . . He took advantage of her innocence.

THE OLDEST BROTHER [*firmly*]. He slyly abused our confidence.

THE STOUT AUNT. The confidence of the entire family.

FATHER. He was going to marry her . . . how could he know . . .

THE STOUT AUNT [*warmly*]. He should have considered this. An upright man remembers that he'll die.

THE THIN AUNT. Oh, what does a man of that sort, of that type, care what becomes of a poor girl whom he has [*moralizingly*] sacrificed to his bad, his bad passions?

THE STOUT AUNT. Such . . . such infamy!

THE POOR RELATIVE. A man who can do a thing like this is a bad man.

MOTHER. He bears all the blame. He was a bad man.

THE THIN AUNT. I always had my suspicions about him. I never had any confidence in him. His sweet, sly talk never caught me; but you, you always petted and fussed about him so.

MOTHER. He did this behind our backs . . . he made us all believe that he was a very upright man.

THE POOR RELATIVE. [*Now brave.*] He was not an upright man; no, he was not.

THE THIN AUNT. All his softness was nothing but pure sham.

MOTHER. He put that on so that he could sneak here and ruin our poor child.

FATHER. And he ruined us all.

THE STOUT AUNT. Behind his outward appearance was hidden a scoundrel.

FATHER. He brought disgrace on us all.

[THE IRRATIONAL BARON *appears in the doorway.*]

THE STOUT AUNT. He was a scoundrel.

FATHER. A good-for-nothing, a scamp.

THE POOR RELATIVE. That's just what he was—a scamp, a good-for-nothing.

THE OLDEST BROTHER. He was no gentleman.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON [*dumbfounded*]. Who are you talking about? [*Embarrassed, they all remain silent.*] Who were the gentry discussing?

FATHER. Who? Who else . . . but this—

THE IRRATIONAL BARON [*indignant*]. Carlos?

FATHER. Yes, indeed.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. What in the world has happened?

FATHER. What has happened? Plenty has happened. . . . He has ruined me. . . . He has destroyed our girl.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. But explain what has really happened?

FATHER. The Doctor examined her . . . she has brought shame on my house . . . this girl . . . before she became his wife . . . he betrayed us . . . he took advantage of our confidence.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. [*Now understanding.*] Oh . . . [*There is a pause.*] Poor Carlos!

FATHER. Poor—poor . . . but we—we have her on our hands.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON [*consolingly*]. But they loved each other so.

FATHER. Loved—loved? And does that excuse the man from being a scoundrel? He cannot marry her now, can he?

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. But the poor boy is dead.

FATHER. Dead? Of course he is dead. . . . Every one can say that. . . . But that's just what he should have considered.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. [*Excited, but controlling himself, softly.*] But you could hardly wait till you could rock your first grandchild.

FATHER. My first grandchild. . . . Do you suppose that I will recognize that child as my grandchild? . . . Do you think that I will have anything to do with that child?

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. But what is going to become of the poor child?

FATHER. That I don't know. . . . I suppose we will board it out.

THE IRRATIONAL BARON [*his anger mastering him*]. A nice sort of a grandpapa—and what is going to become of the mother?

FATHER. That's just what I don't know. That's the worst of it. Who will marry that kind of girl?

MOTHER [*sobbing*]. Yes, who will marry that kind of girl?

THE OLDEST BROTHER. Such a shame!

THE STOUT AUNT. [*Taking courage.*] Such a piece of scoundrelism!

THE THIN AUNT. To bring us to this misfortune! To bring such a catastrophe on us! To abuse our confidence that way! That's nothing but scoundrelism!

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. [*Almost beside himself with rage.*] Oh, gentle female souls, may I remind you that there is only one catastrophe here in question—only that misfortune which happened to poor Carlos. It is he who is dead.

FATHER. He is, sure . . . but we . . .

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. The gentry are enjoying the best of health, but are complaining about what has happened. My Carlos is dead, and you are complaining. I must say, I would to God the reverse were the case.

FATHER. [*Insulted.*] How dare you insult an unfortunate father? . . . Who will marry this helpless creature? Who will marry her?

THE STOUT AUNT. The poor creature!

THE THIN AUNT. The unfortunate victim!

THE IRRATIONAL BARON [*beside himself, no longer able to master his rage, he thunders*]. Silence! Silence! [*Frightened, they all are silent.*] Silence! . . . I will marry her.

FATHER. What . . . what's that? . . .
[*All appear amazed.*]

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. I'll make her my wife! No objections, I hope!

FATHER [*more amazed*]. Of course not; but . . .

THE IRRATIONAL BARON [*permitting no interruption*]. I dared to hope so. You can take my word for it though, ladies and gentlemen, that I would never have mixed with the like of . . .

THE OLDEST BROTHER. Pardon me!

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. [*Shouting.*] Silence! [*Firmly.*] I would have never mixed with the like of you, but I want to provide a father for the child of my Carlos. I will make good his short-comings.

FATHER. But the child . . .

THE IRRATIONAL BARON [*in a rage*]. I know that that child was expected here [*sarcastically*] with a great love. But I hope that this feeling will change if it bears my name.

FATHER [*breathlessly*]. You, you . . . your name!

THE IRRATIONAL BARON [*pitilessly*]. To unite my name with the pickle company for which your family name stands, that I would never do! But Carlos' child must not suffer. I will give it my name.

FATHER. You alone . . . what do you think!

THE IRRATIONAL BARON [*sharply interrupting him*].

I will now take my leave of you, ladies and gentlemen. In four weeks I will return. Then we will hold the wedding in this house. . . . The prospective bride will in the meantime recover sufficient strength to withstand the painful ceremonies. Immediately after the wedding I will go traveling. The Baroness will give birth to the child while I am away. I hope that the Baroness will get all the necessary care. In a half a year she will begin divorce proceedings against me. A divorced Baroness, I hope, will not be a discredit to the firm, nor will the grandchild if it bears my name.

FATHER [*overflowing with gratitude*]. Of course not, of course not . . . now everything will run smoothly again. Your generosity, my dear Baron . . .

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. Don't deceive yourself that I am doing this for your sake. I am only doing this for Carlos.

FATHER. Of course, of course . . . but we are . . .

THE IRRATIONAL BARON. Well, then I shall return four weeks from today.

[*He goes out. The rest stare at each other in utter amazement.*]

THE OLDEST BROTHER. Such a change!

FATHER [*with relief*]. What a splendid man!

MOTHER. Now everything is in order again.

THE THIN AUNT. If Renee will only agree to this!

FATHER [*angrily*]. Why not? She will be very happy.

THE STOUT AUNT. Someone ought to go and tell her.

ONE OF THE SISTERS. [*She rushes in.*] Papa, listen—we are with Renee. . . . She says that Carl made a will three months ago.

FATHER. When?

ONE OF THE SISTERS. Three months ago.

FATHER. Yes? And What?

ONE OF THE SISTERS. She inherits everything.

FATHER. She? Renee?

ONE OF THE SISTERS. Yes.

FATHER. Is it certain?

ONE OF THE SISTERS. Certain.

FATHER. Certain? Then I'll go to her. I will tell her the great news. Come!

[FATHER and daughter go out. There is a pause.]

THE STOUT AUNT. Everything is turning out well.

MOTHER. Yes, yes; let's thank the good Lord for all this.

THE THIN AUNT. If only people don't find out about it.

THE OLDEST BROTHER. Suppose they do? If anyone dares to look askance at Renee, he'll have to settle with me.

THE POOR RELATIVE. Renee will be a Baroness now.

MOTHER [*with bliss*]. Yes!

THE POOR RELATIVE. And she will be a very rich woman as well.

MOTHER [*Beaming*]. Yes!

THE THIN AUNT. How lucky your family is!

MOTHER. Lord be praised! We can now all be very happy.

FATHER [*entering*]. Renee has told me all about it. The last will has been properly made out. It is in the lawyer's office.

MOTHER. Wasn't it kind of Carl?

FATHER [*in a tone of appreciation*]. It was a beautiful deed. Men who are as farsighted as he are rare . . .

THE POOR RELATIVE. A rare man—a very rare man. In every respect he was a rare man.

THE STOUT AUNT. He was a good man, too; and how devotedly he loved our Renee?

THE THIN AUNT. He was almost too good, I would say.

FATHER. He was goodness itself, and every inch a man of honor.

THE POOR RELATIVE. Every inch a man of honor.

FATHER. An honorable, sincere and very straightforward man.

THE OLDEST BROTHER. A gentleman!

THE GRANDMOTHER

CHARACTERS

THE GRANDMOTHER.

HER GRANDCHILDREN :

THE BLOND YOUNG LADY.

THE BRUNETTE YOUNG LADY.

THE BRIDE.

THE VIVACIOUS GIRL.

THE MELANCHOLY GIRL.

THE SENTIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL.

THE JOVIAL YOUNG MAN.

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN.

THE GRANDMOTHER

[*There is only this notable thing to be said about GRANDMOTHER—her hair is snow white, her cheeks rosy and her eyes violet blue. She is the most youthful and enthusiastic, best and most cordial grandmother ever beloved by her grandchildren.*

The scene opens on a broad, sunny terrace furnished with garden furniture, chairs, small tables and chaises longues. Back of the terrace is the beautiful summer residence of GRANDPA. Behind it is a large English garden in its lenten blossoms. THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN enters; yawns; stretches discontentedly; slouches here and there; picks up a volume from the table, then falls into a couch on right, and lighting a cigarette, begins to read. The other grandchildren enter in groups of two and three and seat themselves.]

THE JOVIAL YOUNG MAN. My word, children, I am too full for utterance. What a spread! Now for a good cigar and a soft chair and I am as rich as a king.

THE BLOND YOUNG LADY. We are having such charming weather. Is not this park like a paradise?

THE BRUNETTE YOUNG YADY. How did you like the after-dinner speeches?

THE VIVACIOUS GIRL. Uncle Heinrich was splendid. [*There is great laughter.*]

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. Uncle Heinrich was

never strong in speechmaking, but in the beginning even Demosthenes stuttered.

THE JOVIAL YOUNG MAN. The trouble is that Uncle Heinrich stopped where Demosthenes began. Besides a manufacturer has no time to parade on the sea shore with pebbles under his tongue.

[*There is more laughter.*]

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. Children, who wants a cigarette?

THE BLOND AND BRUNETTE YOUNG LADIES. I!

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN [*handing them cigarettes and lighting a match for them. He speaks to THE BRIDE*]. Aren't you going to smoke?

BRIDE. No, I thank you.

THE JOVIAL YOUNG MAN. Lord, no! She must not! The noble bride must not permit tobacco smoke to contaminate her rosy lips. [*They all laugh.*]

THE VIVACIOUS GIRL. May I have a cigarette, too?

THE JOVIAL YOUNG MAN. You be careful or the same misfortune may happen to you at any minute that happened to Lucy [*pointing to the bride, he hands the VIVACIOUS GIRL a cigarette*].

THE VIVACIOUS GIRL. If my bridegroom shall object to tobacco smoke, he can pack his things and — off.

THE BRUNETTE YOUNG LADY. Well, young people, what are we going to do next?

THE MELANCHOLY YOUNG LADY. Let's remain here. The park looks so beautiful.

THE BLOND YOUNG LADY. Oh, I object. We'll remain here until the sun goes down a little and then we'll play tennis. [*They agree.*]

THE MELANCHOLY YOUNG LADY. Can't we remain here? Let us enjoy the spring in the garden.

THE JOVIAL YOUNG MAN. Let's play tennis. A little exercise is the best cure for romance. And you

can enjoy your spring out there as well—you dreamer. [*They laugh.*]

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. You are as loud as the besiegers of Jericho in your planning.

THE JOVIAL YOUNG MAN. Behold! He speaketh. [*They laugh.*]

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. You are so overbearing in your jollifications that it is positively disgusting. For the past hour you have been giggling away without the slightest reason. You have so much leisure you do not know what to do with yourselves.

THE BRUNETTE YOUNG LADY. Curt, must you always be the killjoy in a party?

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. If you would at least take yourselves off from here.

THE BRUNETTE YOUNG LADY. But admit that today there is reason enough for every kind of jollity.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Is there, indeed? You have finished a costly banquet and now are enjoying a good digestion. You are young and have a healthy animal appetite; but why deck sentimentalism on your horns?

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. Your pardon! Do you suppose that all a person gets out of this remarkable occasion is a good dinner? Have you no appreciation? Do you realize what this day means to all of us?

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Very well, my boy. Now tell me why you are so over-filled with joy?

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. Yes, I will. I am glad that I can celebrate the golden wedding of my grandfather. I am glad that just thirty years ago today grandfather founded his factory. I am glad because of our large and happy family and that so many lovely and good and happy people have come here

to celebrate this remarkable event; all of them good and prosperous.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Prosperous!

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. Yes, I rejoice at their prosperity.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. The laborers down there in the foundry, however, are not as overjoyed at this prosperity as you are. For this prosperity of yours they have been starving these past thirty years.

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. Grandfather was always good to his employees.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Indeed! Our grandfather has managed by hook or by crook to amass an enormous fortune and you are glad that his fortune is now made and you do not have to resort to questionable means.

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN [*hurt*]. Questionable means? You do not intend to assert that our grandpapa . . .

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. I assert nothing. But mark you this. There is only one honest way to gain a large fortune: inheriting it. You cannot earn it without resorting to questionable means.

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. Shame! to say a thing like that!

THE BRUNETTE YOUNG LADY. Shame to say that of grandfather!

[*All of them are upset and disturbed. GRANDMOTHER appears on the balcony.*]

GRANDMOTHER. Why, children, what is it? What's wrong?

THE SENTIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL. Why, grandma, just think of it! Curt said that grandpa made his fortune by questionable means.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. I did not say exactly that —

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. Yes, you did.

THE OTHERS [*chiming in*]. You said that. Yes, you said that.

GRANDMOTHER [*as energetically as possible for her*]. I think you are in error, Curt. In the entire fortune of your grandpa there is not a single copper that was not earned by him in the most honest way.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. But look, grandma, — what I said was — generally in those cases no one —

GRANDMOTHER [*hurt*]. When I tell you this, boy, it is so. When I tell you anything, my child, you should never doubt it.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Yes, grandma, you are quite right. But I maintain that human learning and experience have proved —

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. Why don't you stop? Do you perhaps want to insult grandma? You are taking too great an advantage of our good nature — I'll tell you that!

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. If you folks had any sense —

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. Don't you know enough

...

THE OTHER GRANDCHILDREN. . . . to shut up. [*Attacking him.*] Indeed. He's right. Stop — shut up!

[THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN, *in spite of this scene, wants to continue, but the protests of the others drown his voice. He casts a contemptuous look at them, shrugs his shoulders, throws himself on the sofa and begins to read.*]

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. Now don't trouble your-

self about him any longer, grandma dear. Here, rest yourself nicely in this chair among us.

THE JOVIAL YOUNG MAN. There, grandma! The old folks are there at table. We young people are here in the fresh air. We lacked only the youngest one of us all. And here you are.

[*There is a glad assent as the GRANDMOTHER sits down.*]

THE VIVACIOUS GIRL. Are you quite comfortable, grandma dear? Would you like something to rest your feet on?

GRANDMOTHER. Thanks, my child, I am quite all right, and I am very happy.

THE BLOND YOUNG LADY. Yes, grandma, you ought to feel happy.

THE BRUNETTE YOUNG LADY. How young you look, and how lovely and rosy!

THE BRIDE. Grandma?

GRANDMOTHER. What is it, my angel?

THE BRIDE. Tell me, how does a woman manage so that she is admired by her husband for full fifty years, as you are by grandfather?

THE BRUNETTE YOUNG LADY. Yes, how did you manage that?

GRANDMOTHER. You will all be loved and admired after fifty years as I have been. A person must be good. We must love each other.

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. But, grandmother, is it not wonderful at seventy and seventy-five to love so beautifully and purely as you and grandfather have loved?

GRANDMOTHER. You must always be good and patient with each other, and brave. Never lose courage.

THE VIVACIOUS GIRL. But look, grandma, not even I could be as brave as you have been. And no one

can ever say that I lose courage. [*They all laugh.*] I still shudder when I think how in those days in March of Forty-eight you had to run away! Or in the Sixties when the city was bombarded, you with my mama and Aunt Olga escaped from the burning house . . .

THE SENTIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL. How interesting that was! Tell us another story, grandma. [*There is loud assent.*] Yes, yes, grandma shall tell us another story!

GRANDMOTHER. But I have already told you so much. You heard all our history.

THE SENTIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL. Not I, grandma; I have not heard the story of when you got lost in the *Friedrichsrode* forest.

GRANDMOTHER. That story I have told you so often, children. Ask your mother about it; she'll tell you.

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. But, grandma, I haven't heard it, either. Just tell us that one and we'll go to play tennis.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. If you'll pardon me, grandma, I believe you ought to tell us a different incident today. I've heard that history so often. Tell us something contemporaneous. Tell us about the first sewing machine, or the first railroad, or about crinolines or contemporary theatre or art.

THE BLOND YOUNG LADY. No. Tell us about the woods.

THE OTHERS. Yes, yes, that's right, — the story of how you got lost.

[THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN shrugs his shoulder and buries his head in his book. GRANDMOTHER begins to narrate, and the circle of her admiring and attentive audience grows narrower.]

GRANDMOTHER. Well, my children, it happened in

the year eighteen hundred and forty, a year after grandfather was almost shot by error. In those days the happenings took us quite far away from here, to *Friedrichsrode*, my dears, where you have never been. Your grandfather had a small estate there, and that's how we made our livelihood. We always wished and prayed to get the management of the large estate of the Count of Schwanhausen. But we lived there humbly in the little house.

THE BLOND YOUNG LADY. Was my mama home then?

GRANDMOTHER. No, she was not in this world yet. But a year later she was born. So your grandfather and I lived then in this little red-roofed house. Your grandfather used to be busy with the land the entire day. Those days I was taking on weight, and to reduce I would take long walks through the country. One day in October—in the afternoon—it was beautiful sunny autumn weather—as usual I went again on my long walk. The country there is very beautiful—all hills—covered with dense forests. This afternoon my way led into the famous forest of *Friedrichsrode*. When there I kept on walking—here and there I would stop to pick a flower.

THE BLOND YOUNG LADY. Don't forget, grandma, that it was quite late when you left your house.

GRANDMOTHER. You are correct, my dear. After our dinner I had some things to attend to in the house and that is why I started that day later than usual. I was walking through the forest, going in deeper and deeper and suddenly I began to realize that it was getting dark. It was in the autumn and the days were getting short. When I saw how dark it was I turned homeward. But in the meanwhile evening came sooner than I counted, and suddenly it got dark altogether. Now, thought I, I must hustle. I hur-

ried, as well as I could, but as much as I hurried I did not get home. Had I gone home the right way I would have reached it then, and so it dawned on me that I had lost my way.

THE SENTIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL. Great Heavens . . .

GRANDMOTHER. Indeed, my child, I was really lost in the woods and in the *Friedrichsrode* forest, besides. What that meant you cannot now realize. Since that time these woods have been considerably cleared. Then also we live in a different world today. But in those days *Friedrichsrode* forest was a very, very dismal place. It spread away into the outskirts of the Harz Mountains and was a wild, primæval, godforsaken forest where highway robbers were hiding. And in the winter it was full of the wolves from the mountains.

[*There is a short pause.*]

THE VIVACIOUS GIRL. And what did you do, grandmother?

GRANDMOTHER. Really, my child, a great anxiety came upon me. I stood still and tried to fix my direction. Then I turned to a path which I figured ought to lead me home. After I walked a half hour, however, I found that the forest instead of getting lighter was getting thicker and thicker. Three or four times I changed the direction, but no matter what I did I was walking deeper and deeper into the dark woods. Although the moon was shining then, the branches of the trees were so thick that I could see but little. And that which I saw only frightened me all the more. Every tree stump, every overhanging bough excited my fear. My feet were continuously caught in the roots of big trees and the undergrowth tore my bleeding face and feet; and it

was getting cold. I felt frozen. And dismally quiet, terribly dark was the night in the forest.

[*There is a pause and suspense.*]

THE SENTIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL. Good heavens, how perfectly terrible!

GRANDMOTHER. Then I collected all my wits. I said to myself, if I keep on walking I will lose my way all the more. I ought to remain where I am and wait. When grandfather arrives at home and misses me he will start a search with all the help and people. They will go into the woods with torchlights—and then I will see the lights from the distance and hear them call—and in that way I can get home.

THE MELANCHOLY GIRL. How clever of our grandma!

THE VIVACIOUS GIRL. And how brave!

GRANDMOTHER. After I figured it out that way I looked about for a sheltered nook. In between two great big tree trunks there was, like a cave, like a little house, a place all filled with soft moss. A pleasant camping place. I fell into this and prepared myself for a long wait. I waited and waited. The night peopled the woods with every kind of sound. There was whistling, whispering, humming, blowing, screeching and once from a distance a long-drawn deep howling. This, undoubtedly, was the wolves.

THE SENTIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL [*frightened*]. Merciful God!

GRANDMOTHER. Then even I lost my courage. I wanted to run, run as long as my legs would carry me. But I realized that the wiser thing was to be brave and to remain. So I set my teeth and kept on waiting. And then gradually the howling ceased. So, I sat there on this moss bank gazing before me and thought of many things. Suddenly I heard a noise. I straightened up and listened. It was a breaking

sound and a rustle as though someone were brushing aside the underbrush. . . . The noise was getting nearer and nearer.

THE SENTIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL. Oh!

GRANDMOTHER. I was all ears. I could clearly distinguish now that the sound was the footstep of a human being. Frightened, I started through the darkness and in the dull moonlight I saw that actually a man was wading through the thick underbrush. What was I to do? I pressed against the tree trunk and my fast and loud-beating heart seemed to be in my throat. The man was coming directly toward me. When he was about three paces away from me and I could distinguish his features, I felt like fainting. It was "Red Mike," a very dangerous fellow from our neighborhood; everyone knew that he was a robber. Later on he was imprisoned for murder, but he escaped from the prison. Now he was here. . . . What should I do?

THE VIVACIOUS GIRL [*breathlessly*]. What did you do, grandma?

THE SENTIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL. Great heavens!

GRANDMOTHER. Frenzied, I pressed against the tree trunk. I wanted to hide, but the robber came directly toward me. It was as though he could see me even in this darkness and behind the tree trunk. Later on when he was caught, I found out, that he had prepared this very place for his night's resting place. He had brought all this soft moss there. Of course, I did not know that he just came there to rest himself. All I saw was that he was making directly for me. Then such a great fear seized me that instead of pressing against the tree and letting him go past me I shrieked just as he came within reaching distance and began to run away.

[*There is a pause and feverish suspense.*]

THE MELANCHOLY YOUNG LADY. And what did the robber do?

GRANDMOTHER. My sudden outcry and quick dash and flight scared him for the moment, but as soon as I appeared in the moonlight, he saw that it was only a woman who had frightened him. He hesitated about a half a minute and then started to pursue me. I flew. I was young then and I could run fast. But it was dark and I did not know my way. As I pressed forward I ran into a low branch and tore my cheek so that it bled. My skirt was torn into shreds. Suddenly I stumbled and fell to the ground. I hurt myself quite painfully, but in spite of that I rose quickly again and commenced to run. And the robber after me all the time. I could always hear his footsteps in my wake. My legs were about to give up under me when I got an idea to hide behind a stout tree trunk. But the robber began to look through the underbrush in the spot where he last saw me and he finally found me. He came near me.

THE VIVACIOUS GIRL. How terrible!

GRANDMOTHER. With one single leap I jumped aside and started to run again. Once more I fell down and again I rose. Aimlessly I ran wildly over roots and stones and the robber kept right on after me. . . . And the distance between me and my pursuer was getting smaller and smaller. Then all of a sudden I heard the sound of his footsteps close to me—to escape him I tried to dash away to the side of him but with a sudden leap he was by my side. Grabbing me by my shoulder he threw me on the ground and I fell upon my back. He had run so fast that he dashed a couple of paces past me. He turned about. . . . And then I saw that he had a long knife in his hand.

THE SENTIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL [*horrified*].
Merciful heaven!

GRANDMOTHER. I could not budge. . . . And unspeakable fear seized me. . . . Then I uttered a piercing shriek. . . . The robber approached me. . . . I cried out. . . .

[*There is a pause.*]

THE MELANCHOLY GIRL. Then, then —

THE VIVACIOUS GIRL. Well, what then? What?

GRANDMOTHER. I cried out like an insane person. . . . Now the robber was near me. . . . He bent over me. . . . Suddenly a voice sounded, — “*who is crying here?*” the voice seemed to be near — the footsteps were audible — “*who’s crying here?*” it asked the second time. . . . The branches parted and a man in a hunting habit with a gun in his hand appeared. The robber took to his heels and flew into the woods. The hunter now came near me and called to a second man who followed. They helped me to rise and they carried me over to a small clearing. There I saw a light buggy into which they lifted me. Soon they fetched the horses and in a half hour I was in the Schwanhausen castle sipping hot brandy which they had prepared for me. The man in the hunting habit was the Count of Schwanhausen, who had been hunting in the woods.

THE SENTIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL. How interesting!

GRANDMOTHER. In the castle I quite recovered. Then the Count ordered another carriage to drive me home and at six in the morning I landed safely in our house. Your grandpa was sick with worry. . . . He and his people had searched for me in the woods for hours. And that’s how I was almost lost. A few days later grandpa went to thank the Count for my rescue. The Count took a liking to him.

THE BLOND YOUNG LADY. That was the old Count?

GRANDMOTHER. Yes, it was the old Count. The benefactor of all of us. Grandfather thanked him courteously for my rescue. The Count took a liking to him and soon after that grandfather got the management of the entire Schwanhausen estate, which proved the cornerstone of his good fortune. And that, my dears, is the story of my night wander in the forest of *Friedrichsrode*.

[*Amid general approval, GRANDMA is surrounded. Everybody is indebted to her. They all speak at once, except THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN.*]

"We thank you cordially."

"It was wonderful, grandma, dear."

"Interesting."

"Beautiful."

THE VIVACIOUS GIRL. Grandma is a story-telling genius!

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. A most wonderful one!

GRANDMOTHER. Very well, my dears, but now run along to your tennis game. I'll come over later to watch on. [*They all agree.*]

THE POLITE YOUNG MAN. Three cheers for our very dear beloved charming grandma.

[*They all cheer three times, then they surround her, kiss her cheeks and head and stroke her hair.*]

THE BLOND YOUNG LADY. *Adieu*—old sweetheart.

THE BRUNETTE YOUNG LADY. *Auf wiedersehen*—precious grandma!

THE SENTIMENTAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL [*inspired*]. Grandma. . . . ! [*She rushes over to her and covers her with kisses.*]

Grandma bears all these amiabilities with pleasurable tolerance. She strokes and pats the grandchildren and as they retire, she fondly gazes after them, nodding to them with laughter.]

GRANDMOTHER. Curt — are not you going with the others?

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. No.

GRANDMOTHER. Why not, Curt? Why don't you follow the others?

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. They think that I am bad, and I know that they are stupid.

[GRANDMOTHER *seats herself in silence.* THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN *continues to read. He lights a new cigarette. While lighting the cigarette —*]

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Grandma!

GRANDMOTHER. What is it, my child?

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Whatever you say might, of course, never be questioned . . .

GRANDMOTHER. No, my child.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. But do tell me, grandma, did that story really happen in that way?

GRANDMOTHER. What story?

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. The night wander through the *Friedrichsrode* forest.

GRANDMOTHER. Certainly it happened.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Exactly as you told it? Are you quite sure that you remember all those details.

GRANDMOTHER. Yes. Why?

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Oh, just so. I merely wanted to inquire, grandma.

GRANDMOTHER. But why did you want to?

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. I was just interested. Thank you very much. Do not let me disturb you further, grandma.

[*He takes up his book and continues to read.* THE GRANDMOTHER *remains seated, but is greatly embarrassed. She would like to keep on gazing into the park and enjoying her quiet, but she is*

unable to concentrate her thoughts. She is getting more and more disturbed. There is a pause.]

GRANDMOTHER. Curt!

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Yes—grandma, dear.

GRANDMOTHER. Curt, why have you asked me if the forest incident happened that way?

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. I merely wanted to find out, grandma.

GRANDMOTHER. You just wanted to find out. But one does not ask such things without some good reason.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. I was interested.

GRANDMOTHER. Interested, but why are you interested?

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Just in general. But do not get disturbed on account of that, grandma.

[THE GRANDMOTHER is silent.]

[THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN picks up his book. THE GRANDMOTHER wants to drop the subject at this point. She does not succeed, but continues to look over toward the young man. He reads on.]

GRANDMOTHER. Curt!

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Yes, grandma, dear.

GRANDMOTHER. Curt, you shall tell me this instant the reason you asked if the incident really happened that way!

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. But, grandma . . . I have already told you that. . . .

GRANDMOTHER. Don't you tell me again that you asked because the matter interested you. You would have never asked such a question if you did not have some special reason for it.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. But, grandma—

GRANDMOTHER. Curt, if you do not this moment tell me why you said that, then I will never — [*her voice becomes unusually strong and shakes*] I never in my life will speak to you again.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. But, grandma, I do not want to insult you.

GRANDMOTHER. You will not insult me if you will be sincere and open. Be sincere always. . . . And you will not insult me. But when you are trying to hide something from me, that's when you insult me. This *cannot* remain in this way. I must know what you are thinking of. I must know that.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Grandma, I was afraid you would be angry with me.

GRANDMOTHER. If you keep on concealing things I shall be angry. No matter what you have to say I will not hold it against you.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Are you not angry now?

GRANDMOTHER. No. I promise you I will not be angry. Say whatever you please.

[THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN *hesitates*.]

GRANDMOTHER. Well, then — out with it — speak up, my child — be it what it may as long as it is frank and sincere. Speak up, now. Come!

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Very well then, grandma. It is impossible that the story could happen in that manner.

GRANDMOTHER [*offended*]. You mean that I told an untruth?

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Oh, no. I did not say that the incident did not happen. I just maintain that it could not have happened in that fashion.

GRANDMOTHER. But why not?

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. On account of the details. Let us take it for granted, grandma, that as

you state you commenced your exercise walk in the afternoon . . .

GRANDMOTHER. Yes.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Let's say that you had household duties and started out quite late—about four o'clock.

GRANDMOTHER [*disturbed, but following the cross-examination intently*]. Yes.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Very well, you started at four o'clock. The walk was a good one and consumed—let us say one hour and a half.

GRANDMOTHER. Yes.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Yes? This brings us to half-past five o'clock. In October and in a dense forest besides at half-past five it gets fairly dark at that hour. It was then that you lost your way?

THE GRANDMOTHER [*nods her head in assent*].

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Another hour and a half spent in wandering—that brings us to seven o'clock. You now reached the night lodging of the robber—here you were resting?

GRANDMOTHER. Exactly.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Quite right. Here you were waiting and resting—now we want to allow a long time for it—three—let us say—three and a half hours.

GRANDMOTHER [*involuntarily*]. Not that long . . .

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Oh, yes . . . let us . . . we'll then have reached half-past ten o'clock. It could not have been later when this forest bandit came. These pirates never go to their bed earlier. They shun light and must get their sleep while the world is the darkest. He could not sleep during the day even in the darkest forests. In short, then, it was half-past ten?

GRANDMOTHER. Half-past ten.

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Now began the flight and the pursuit. You ran—let us say—full twenty minutes. That is a great deal. I was a track runner in college and I know what a twenty-minute stretch means. Shall we say twenty minutes?

GRANDMOTHER. Twenty minutes . . .

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. In any circumstances it was not even eleven when you were safely out of danger?

GRANDMOTHER. Yes . . .

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. And—and a half hour later you were sipping hot brandy in the Schwanhausen castle?

GRANDMOTHER. Yes . . .

[THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN *is silent.*]

GRANDMOTHER [*shaking with excitement*]. And—what else?

[THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN *is silent.*]

GRANDMOTHER. [*She shakes with fear as to what will follow, but forces herself to face it.*] Well, say on . . . what else? . . .

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. At six on the following morning you reached your home and . . .

[*He pauses.*]

GRANDMOTHER. [*If her loud-speaking could be called an outcry, then she cries out.*] Yes . . . What else? . . . What happened then? . . . Go on . . . say it . . . what else?

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. [*He makes a new attempt to tell everything bravely at once, but hesitates.*] In the morning at six you arrived at home. The others had no idea as to the distance between Schwanhausen and Friederichsrode. But I wanted to see it myself, so last year with a friend I made a walking trip through that country. I tried this dis-

tance. In a half hour of slow walking I reached from one place to the other, and the horses in the Count's stables and the state roads were then in as good condition as today. Well, then you started from the castle at half-past five in the morning; but you reached there at half-past eleven the preceding night. . . . You spent six entire hours in the castle. . . . Then, another point—they all speak of the count, the “benefactor of us all,” as the “old count.” . . . When he died five years ago he was, of course, an old count—an old man of seventy. . . . But thirty-five years ago he was a young count of thirty years of age.

[The GRANDMOTHER *stares blindly at THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN. Alarmed over GRANDMA's fright, he rises. He would very much like to make up to her, but he lacks words. The GRANDMOTHER rises. She is trembling. With a shaking hand she is nervously setting her dress to rights. Twice she turns to the young man to speak to him, but is unable to utter a word. Then she turns; she is about to return into the house, but remains near the doorstep. Again she turns; then she is about to go in, but turns again and remains standing.*]

THE DISAGREEABLE YOUNG MAN [*frightened*].
Grandma, you gave me your word that you would not be angry.

GRANDMOTHER. [*She stumbles forward a few steps. She is disturbed, shivering, beside herself, complaining, almost sobbing.*] You are an evil child! You are a bad, bad and evil child! For fifty years I have told the same story . . . always the same, same way . . . and that it happened differently never, never even came into my mind.

SOME OUTSTANDING FEATURES OF THE JAPANESE STAGE



THE rich accumulation of artistic forces within the Eastern theater has not yet begun to flow out to other countries. The actors of Japan are walled about by the boundaries of their own shores. How much longer will the Japanese stage remain hidden from the world, is the question that comes to one who values it and would like to see it receive full appreciation in the West. Would but some modern Commodore Perry knock to awaken the art world of Japan,—for sooner or later the Occident will begin clamoring at Japan's door to study, admire and enjoy the large store of theater treasure that is as yet unexplained, unexplored.

That the Japanese theater is still unknown in other lands is very largely due to the attitude of the Japanese people themselves. This attitude is the result of long centuries of life that flowed on untroubled by the spirit of investigation that was fermenting in the West and has brought about the development of the natural sciences. Not having been accustomed to explain and analyze, the Japanese now find it difficult to make clear their own institutions. In consequence, the Japanese often display a marked lack of confidence in their theater, believing that it cannot be understood in the West, and will therefore receive adverse criticism. There are

also Westerners who, either from prejudice or ignorance, loudly proclaim that they can find nothing to amuse or interest them in the theater of Japan.

It is true that there are many and striking differences between the theaters of East and West; but the day has come when differences between nations as between individuals must be respected. It were a pity if all the people that on earth do dwell should suddenly become uniform in character. No two grains of wheat are alike, and no two human beings are ever the same. The world has need for the true development of all people, and the disregard of the spiritual products of any nation will only lead to trouble in the future.

There is displayed so much originality, such strong individuality and such characteristic national traits in Kabuki, the Japanese stage, that it cannot fail to be treated with respect and admiration by a comprehending West, whose rapid tendency at present is toward freedom for the individual and the demand that nations be themselves. Kabuki thus becomes one of the strongest media for making Japan known to other peoples.

The differences between the Eastern and Western stages are so great that apparently they obstruct the way to a clear understanding. And to many an Occidental this is sufficient reason why Kabuki has remained apart, its actors unknown, its art unvalued. But in spite of the differences, the Oriental stage holds much for the West and will one day exert a powerful influence upon the theaters of the Occident.

One of the most striking differences between the Western and Eastern stage is that in the West emphasis is always on the plot of a drama, while in the East treatment is everything. No matter how flimsy the play itself, its simple material will always be

glorified by its treatment in the East. This is the reason why so many Westerners earnestly searching to find the meaning of the Japanese theater are often so much at sea. They are so busy trying to extract everything from the subject-matter of a play that the wonderful treatment goes over their heads; they are so anxious to know the whys and wherefores of every action that they are unable to see that the most important thing to observe is the taste, imagination and feeling with which the play is produced.

This emphasis on treatment rather than on the story or plot is an underlying principle of all forms of Japanese dramatic art. Japanese dramatic genius has expressed itself in three great forms,—Kabuki, the popular theater of the country; Joruri, the doll theater of Osaka; and No, the classic drama that has been handed down for many centuries.

Kabuki has been the melting pot for many kinds of theater material, and infused in it are most of the conventions of the No; while the ballad-drama of the doll theater has been assimilated to a remarkable degree. Kabuki, the theater of the people, has often been referred to by those who do not know the subject, as something belonging to the lower classes, despised and vulgar, in contrast to the aristocratic No. Yet Kabuki, absorbing as it does, everything that pertains to itself, has not hesitated to go to the No for inspiration, and the Shosagoto, or music-posture dramas, which form such a rich treasure in Kabuki, have nearly all had their origin in the No. In Joruri, or the ballad-drama in which the puppets are used instead of actors of flesh and blood, the treatment is also very remarkable; while the No, the ancient drama-form of the country, consists of poetry, music, movement, acting, all molded together in a highly concentrated organic whole. Here treat-

ment reigns supreme, the plots being ethereal to a degree. In all three forms, and their subdivisions, it is found that expression, or how the thing is done, is much more valued than the story.

An example from Kabuki will make the distinction between treatment and plot clearer. *Sendaihagi* is one of the most popular plays upon the Japanese stage, and the poison scene in it never fails to enthrall an audience. Masaoka, the faithful nurse to Tsurukiyo, the little prince, has discovered a plot to poison him; and in order to protect him she prepares his meal herself, while her son Semmatsu, the play-fellow of Tsurukiyo, attempts to amuse his master. The children are very hungry. They throw some grains of rice to the birds and yet have nothing to eat themselves. At last the simple meal is ready. Then a wicked woman appears to present a box of poisoned cakes to Tsurukiyo. Semmatsu takes one of the cakes instead of the prince and sacrifices himself that the life of the lord may be spared. It is not the mere story of this dramatic scene that has claimed the attention of many generations of playgoers; it is the wonderful treatment. It is not a scene from real life, although the luxurious interior of the dwelling is in keeping with the estate of the little prince who is heir to fifty-four counties of northwestern Japan. The screens of the background have for design gold clouds, bamboo and swallows, and to one side are the ceremonial utensils of gold with which Masaoka prepares the food. Masaoka herself is a resplendent nurse, her flowing black robe bearing a design of snow on bamboo, within a scarlet kimono, with gold brocaded obi. Setting, costumes, the ballad-singer offering his explanations of the story to the accompaniment of the samisen, combine to lift the simple plot beyond the confines of real

life, and thereby bring into high relief Masaoka's faithfulness to her trust and her sacrifice of her own son that the prince may escape.

Another striking difference between the stage of West and East is that in the West there has always been evinced a passionate desire for truth, while in the East the theater has sought to give expression to beauty. These two attitudes are the result of the difference in life and psychology of Occident and Orient; the West full of the spirit of investigation, discovery, analysis; the East living near to nature, unconscious of personal art and psychology, hesitating to venture forth into the realm of the unknown. Since truth and beauty are both great aims, it is impossible to compare them with a view to argument as to whether one is superior.

The great aim of the Western drama, however, has been to reveal personality, to lay bare the human soul. But in the course of this development realism has been crowned king. Now we are beginning to understand that truths may be revealed without realism, and a revolt against the old methods has set in.

Today the world begins to discover that to rely upon the head alone is not satisfactory, and that anything done with heart is much superior to a product of the pure intellect. All the legitimate material of the theater — movement, color, dance, music, poetry — is still to be found in Kabuki; even the pantomime of the puppet and the feats of acrobats are not scorned. And it is because the Eastern stage holds so much of inspiration in the rebuilding of our own theater that its outstanding features ought to be made known to Western people.

One of the chief features of the Japanese stage is its remarkable use of movement. It is entirely unlike that found on the Western stage, for it is based

on conflicting rhythms. Here in the East is a freedom of stage movement unknown to the West, which opens up possibilities that the Occident is just beginning to grasp dimly. The Eastern stage movement is in direct contrast to that upon the Western stage, which has for foundation musical harmony with its exact regulations of rhythm, as it is to the purely literary drama of the West, which is taken from real life and has no relation to rhythm or movement, but appeals chiefly to the intellect as solving some problem of modern society.

This wonderful stage movement of Japan is the basis of the No, Kabuki and Joruri, the undertow of almost every masterpiece, the medium for bringing together all the accessories into such a unity as to enthrall and carry away the spectator. There are many kinds of movement, from that of the posture dance by a leading character to the mass movement of a fight or attack. An example from the No may serve.

A mountain goddess enters the long bridge to the No stage, to the conventional slow and stately measure. She wears a stiff white skirt, an overdress of wistaria gauze adorned with drooping blossoms of wistaria in gold, and upon her head is a gold crown with long pendants. The top of the crown is decorated with sprigs of tender green, suggestive of the forest in spring. The mask is that of a young woman, and as the figure slowly advances it is watched with a kind of fascination—passivity and resignation forming the atmosphere of this out-of-door deity. When, however, she becomes impassioned, intoning her poetical lines with growing emotion, the quiet figure begins to move, the feet sliding over the stage now to the right and now to the left, the fan pointing outward, or the hand gesturing with

the folded sleeve so characteristic of the No—faster and faster to the rhythm of chorus and instruments, until the goddess seems alive. The gold drops of her crown wave, the green plant upon her head quivers; and she who entered passive and resigned is awake, all glowing and radiant with life.

There is that masterpiece of Kabuki, *Kanjincho*, taken from the No more than two hundred years ago, when it was first played by the founder of the Ichikawa Danjuro line, and which is held in high esteem to the present day. Benkei, the warrior-priest, has outwitted Togashi, the keeper of the pass. Togashi is on guard by order of Yoritomo, the lord of Kamakura, to prevent the escape of Yoshitsune, his brother. Yoshitsune's retinue in the disguise of yamabusi, or mountain priests, are about to depart, since Benkei has saved the situation by his ready rejoinders in the duel of words with Togashi, when one of the guards becomes suspicious of the identity of Yoshitsune and they are called back. Benkei, to throw the guards off the scent, strikes his young master again and again with his staff. The yamabushi, angry at this assault against the sacred person of their master, are in indignant array on one side, the guards in attacking attitude on the other; while Togashi and Benkei in the center draw closer and closer together, all the feet joining in quick sliding movement to the full chorus and music of the nagauta orchestra—the movement more than any other element serving to intensify the emotion of the situation.

There is in many of Kabuki's plays, and especially those adapted from the doll theater, an inner and an outer movement that baffles description; for it is something that is deeply felt, and yet can hardly be separated from the organic whole in order to bear

analysis, so closely to it interwoven with every detail as to become part and parcel of the drama.

This is the reason why the Westerner finds it so difficult to enter into the spirit of No, Kabuki and Joruri. The movement is something to which he must grow accustomed. But once this movement is made clear, there must follow a just recognition and admiration for principles different so widely from those of the West, and, therefore, on this very account, worthy of the greatest study and consideration.

In connection with movement there is the music of Kabuki, to which Western people object on the score that it offends their ears, since they have been so long accustomed to the smooth and pleasing harmony of Occidental music. The conflicting elements in Japanese music seem like chaos to an ear unaccustomed to its peculiarities. And yet Kabuki music becomes for the most part, not melody, but interpretative sound that aids and abets the drama in process on the stage, supporting the emotions the actors seek to express. Japanese music is too fine an expression of the inner life of the people to remain forever unclear and unexplained. Sooner or later a genius, whether of East or West, will make it known and appreciated.

It is very evident also that the color craftsmen of No, Kabuki and Joruri have much to teach the world. Here are marvellous color combinations never seen in the West, rainbow hues caught up from all the odd corners of ancient Asia, sufficient to stir the hearts and imaginations of Western audiences as they have never been stirred before. There is in Western countries a real hunger for Eastern color, and this is shown by the so-called Oriental plays which are given frequently and with such success in

New York and London. If the audiences in these great cities who are delighted with such hybrid plays, mixtures of Western ideas with a little Eastern color, could witness the luxury, the gorgeousness, the splendor of the Tokyo stage at either the Imperial or Kabuki-za, they would be more than astonished and delighted.

Still another feature of the Japanese stage must gain recognition from the West, and that is its remarkable excursions into the realm of the unreal. Everywhere there are signs that realism is to be no longer the god and guide of the Western theater. Therefore Kabuki's exploitation of the unreal is of special significance at this time of change when everything that was once considered satisfactory in society as well as in the theater has been proved unsatisfactory. In Kabuki are to be found marvellous heroes and heroines never seen on the land or sea of this terrestrial globe. They are pure products of the imagination, particularly the strange but highly interesting characters of the *ningyo shibai*, or doll theater, the special possession of Osaka; the weird phantoms of *No*, the grotesque personages who disport themselves in Ichikawa Danjuro's eighteen pieces in which the *aragoto*, or exaggerated style of acting is to be seen; and the ethereal, graceful, fairy-like creatures of *Shosagoto*, or the music-posture drama of Kabuki. If this remarkable use of the unreal is shown to the Occident, the Western stage will take heart again and once more create, out of the pure fabric of fancy, to the delight of a world tired and jaded by a surfeit of representations of hopeless realities of life.

And yet again Kabuki has a lesson for the West in its unity—the unity in diversity that the Western theater searches for eagerly. Unity in diversity is

the very principle of life itself; and that the Eastern stage craftsmen have unconsciously made use of this principle is evidence that they have come nearer the true source of art than their contemporaries in the West.

When Nakamura Kichiyemon, the brilliant young actor of the Tokyo stage, acts as Kato Kiyomasa in the play by Mokuami, the leading playwright of the Meiji era, a vivid impression of Kabuki's unity is gained. There is but one motive to this play, and that is Kiyomasa's loyalty to his master, Hideyoshi. In fact it can hardly be called a play at all, as drama is known in the West, because it is nothing but loyalty with accessories. Each gesture portrays this loyalty, and words, scenes, music are only aids that strengthen the main idea. When Kiyomasa comes to receive the favor of his lord, it is he who absorbs all the interest. Hideyoshi within his gorgeous Momoyama palace, his scarlet-clad pages on each side, sitting in state before a wide expanse of gold screen, is really nothing more than part of the background for Kiyomasa, the humble devoted retainer, advancing with the greatest reverence to take the sword offered to him as a token of faith. The whole scene, striking in its richness of coloring, serves but to bring out the attitude of mind of the faithful servant. Even Kiyomasa's huge, checked, exaggerated costume most effectively emphasises the motive, and all the elements of the play are a unity.

But the greatest need of the West is to know more intimately the art of the actor as it has been so long practiced in Japan. Mansfield once said: "But who shall say, when this generation has passed away, how Yorick played?" In Japan how Yorick played is known, for every great actor leaves his mark upon the son or pupil who succeeds him, and the inherit-

ance of style and type is handed on from one generation to another. The training of Japanese actors begins in childhood, and they are given the privilege of acting with their superiors and unconsciously learning all the intricacies of the art of acting; and throughout their entire apprenticeship they are subjected to the discipline entailed by a constant appearance before the audience.

Perhaps the most prominent feature of Japanese acting is its power of suggestion, the ability to leave to the imagination of others the completion of an idea, thus making the audience at one with the actor. Kabuki is so full of suggestive acting that good examples may be found in all directions; but Masaoka's preparation of the rice for Tsurukiyo in the poison scene of *Sendaihagi* is one of the best. Kichiyemon, who is unusually good in this kind of acting, acts this scene in such a manner that once seen it can never be forgotten. Masaoka unfolds a low gold screen that discloses a gold lacquer table under which are a gold rice pot, a gold water jar, and other utensils for boiling the rice and making tea. The Occidental, accustomed to realism, will first question how real food is to be cooked on such gorgeous and apparently theatrical stage furniture; and then he will be lost in admiration of Kichiyemon's acting, which suggests to his audience the presence of all the necessary articles of food without actually using them. The gold water ladle is used to dip up the unseen water, and the unseen, uncooked grains of rice appear as though the water had been poured off; but the actual washing is left to the imagination. By the force of suggestion Masaoko makes it clear that the rice has been at last properly cooked. The bubbling of the steam against the lid of the rice pot as the contents are almost in the act of boiling over is

indicated behind the scenes by a property man, and a black-robed stage attendant is plainly seen to move the screen in such a manner as to place within easy reach of Masaoka the food which it has taken her so long to make ready.

It may be contended that no matter how great the art of acting may be, the actors will not be understood in Occidental countries, especially in the matter of their alien tongue. But the actor's art speaks for itself—genius is something that explains itself by its own laws, the laws of simplicity and clarity. Moreover, Kabuki plays do not depend on dialogue alone, but on unity, movement, music, color, costumes, setting, which do not need explanation, but make their own unaided impression. It is ridiculous to state, as is done often in Japan, that Japanese actors or their plays will not be understood in the West. This is to argue that Occidental people are devoid of taste and judgment. Besides, if those who have gone from Japan to amuse and entertain Western audiences—amateurs and adventurers as most of them have been—are able to succeed in catching the attention of theatergoers in the West, the real actors will undoubtedly make a greater and stronger impression.

There are many other features of the Japanese stage which could be mentioned, but only those are touched upon in this article which are worthy of the highest consideration, and which in the near future will carry a new message to the theater of the West.

At present there is much talk concerning a closer commercial coöperation between Japan and America. In the history of all nations trade and barter have invariably led to an exchange of craftsmanship, literature and art. It follows that if a greater coöperation in commerce is effected between the peoples of

East and West, a new relation between the writers, artists, and thinkers of both peoples will be brought about. That is why a tour of the best Japanese actors to the West would prove of greater value toward such a coöperation than all the after-dinner speeches of all the statesmen of both countries on "better understandings."

And when once the art of the Japanese theater wins a place for itself in the West, the Japanese actor will act as an art missionary. What an impetus No, Kabuki and Joruri will give to many a young Western playwright, artist, author, poet or actor, hungry and thirsty as they are for the fare that Kabuki can provide so bountifully.

It may be thought by the Japanese that their stage need not concern itself with the outside world; that the self-contained and self-centered existence it has hitherto enjoyed need in no way be altered; and at the same time Occidentals may continue to adopt a complacent and indifferent attitude toward the Eastern theater. Still it remains certain that when the Occident succeeds in inducing Kabuki to emerge from its obscurity into the full light of appreciation and recognition, this very same appreciation and recognition will react upon Kabuki itself, stimulating it to new heights of growth and development; while at the same time the Occident will discover undreamed of possibilities in the theater treasure-trove of this ancient Asia.

ZOË KINCAID.

EARLY CURTAIN-RAISINGS IN AMERICA



As a rule the theater was not much in evidence during pre-Revolutionary times. Religious and other influences were not favorable to it, and the sternly repressive spirit of Pilgrim and Puritan was strongly felt in our land. It is true that among the southern colonists there was far less opposition to the theater than in the North. And even "up North" the younger generation was not at heart very averse to stage diversions.

From the day when the Mayflower ended its voyage in Plymouth harbor till near the middle of the 18th century the history of America drama could have been written within a book of few pages. There was an abundance of "shows" or "sights," such as "the Lyon, the king of Beasts" that "is now to be seen on board said Sloop (the Phoenix) at the North side of the Long Wharff, Boston, at 6d. each person;" but although there was a variety show in Philadelphia during the year 1724 where jigs were danced on a tight rope and the audience were "entertained with the comical humor of Pickle Herring," the theatrical profession was not much in evidence in America until after Revolutionary times.

Until about the middle of the 18th century it is probable that most of the actors and actresses playing in the colonies were of the strolling vagabond type. It is very possible that such vagabond players appeared in divers costumes and on divers stages before the 18th century, at least before the play given in Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1718. There was

a play-house in New York in 1733 and another at Charleston in 1735, and doubtless there were others of which no information has reached us. In 1750 the first known American managers, Murray and Kean, performed in a wooden building on Nassau Street, New York, several plays, one of which was "The Historical Tragedy of King Richard III., wrote originally by Shakespeare, and alter'd by Colley Cibber, Esq." Previous to this season in New York, Murray and Kean had an unfortunate experience with Addison's *Cato* in Philadelphia, where the authorities interfered to stop their drawing "money from inconsiderate people." It is believed that these same managers were instrumental in producing *Otway's Orphan*, assisted by amateurs, in a Boston coffee-house. This attempt to invade Boston histrionically met a stern and severe repulse, and the drama was henceforth banished from that town during the remainder of pre-Revolutionary times.

As we should expect, the Murray and Kean theatrical company in New York was, to use an expressive Americanism, "pretty punk," most of them being recruits from other professions. This New York Company played afterwards in Williamsburg, Virginia, and it was just opening a new brick theater at Annapolis when its career was brought to an end by the arrival in the colonies of an excellent company sent over from England.

Although, as a rule, the theater was not much in evidence in America during pre-Revolutionary times, it was very much in evidence in England. Garrick was in his glory around 1750, and William Hallam, of the Goodman's Fields theater, sent over to New York a certain Robert Upton (America's first advance agent) to study the theatrical ground in the colonies and to build a play-house. Upton, however,

proved to be very unscrupulous; but Hallam persisted in his venture, with the result that in 1752 Hallam's London Company of Comedians, twelve in number, with his brother, Lewis Hallam, as manager, arrived in Virginia during June. At Williamsburg Lewis Hallam refitted an old theater, announcing to the "publick" that he would begin America's first real theatrical season with *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Anatomist*. Hallam and his company were rather discouraged at first, but their work was applauded and successful from the very opening night, September 15, 1752. It was, indeed, a most prosperous season, lasting eleven months, and afterwards Hallam's London Company played for a while in the new brick theater at Annapolis, as well as in other places in Maryland. Then, in 1753, Lewis Hallam and his company went to New York.

Northward of Maryland this pioneer theatrical company encountered much opposition, particularly in New England. The wooden play-house on Nassau Street, New York, was wholly unsuited for them; it was torn down and a new play-house erected between the month of June and September 13, 1753, which was the opening night. Henceforth performances were given on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, this first New York theatrical and operatic season continuing until March 25, 1754. It was really an excellent company for those days, and from that time until the beginning of the Revolutionary war it held complete possession of the American stage. Its performances took place from Newport, Rhode Island, to Charleston, South Carolina, and even in the West Indies.

The play-houses built by this now American theatrical company were usually roughly constructed, being very much like an enclosed shed, and were

often painted red. The stage scenery was crude. There were three kinds of seats; boxes, pit and the gallery. The entrance to the boxes was by way of the stage, and the ticket-office was often situated upon the stage. The management arranged to have its play-bills distributed to business offices and private residences the day before the performance, and ladies reserved their seats by sending a servant to occupy them until their arrival at the theater. A play began at the early hour of six o'clock, smoking was permitted, and liquid refreshments of the stronger kind were served to the audience in the pit.

The lighting of these early play-houses was, of course, very simple and primitive, as was the music. When Hallam opened the season at Williamsburg in 1752 the only music was that furnished by the town music-master on a harpsichord. Later in New York the company employed an imported violinist. The instruments generally used were probably a harpsichord, fiddle and an oboe. Respecting such theater orchestra, the *Pennsylvania Journal* of September 24, 1767, mentioned a band of music which was to play between the acts, and this same newspaper announces in its advance notice of Milton's *Comus* in 1770 that the orchestra would be "conducted by Mr. Hallam." Very often professional musicians and gentlemen performers would play in the orchestra for their own enjoyment, without any pay whatsoever. In 1769 the following notice appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*: "For the future, the days of performance will be Tuesday and Friday. The Orchestra, on Opera Nights, will be assisted by some musical Persons, who, as they have no View but to contribute to the Entertainment of the Public, certainly claim a Protection from any Manner of Insult."

Not much is known respecting the actors and actresses of this earliest of American companies. The first manager of the company, Lewis Hallam, was an excellent low comedian, while his wife, who afterwards married Mr. Douglass, who followed Hallam as manager, was a very pretty woman and an actress of much ability. Lewis Hallam, the second, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Hallam, was for a long time America's leading actor. He was called the Garrick of the American stage, and there can be no doubt that he was a remarkable actor though not one of the world's greatest actors. The American company of pre-Revolutionary days was an excellent theatrical troupe, but it was by no means a wonderful one. It was more successful in plays of comedy than in plays of tragedy.

In 1774 the curtain descended upon the first chapter of the American stage. The Continental Congress of that year in its Articles of Association put itself on record against "horse-racing and all kinds of gaming, cock-fighting, exhibitions of shews, plays, and other expensive diversions and entertainments." This was a sort of war-economy, and the American company withdrew from its American stage. The members of the company departed for the West Indies, and the last of the early curtain-raising in the colonies came to an end.

CHARLES NEVERS HOLMES.

THE CODA

BY CHARLES STRATTON.

THE PLAYERS

DOROTHY HUDSON.

JOEL C. PHILLIPS.

MRS. JOEL C. PHILLIPS.

[*The curtain rises upon a small, intimate room of the Hudson home. While not exactly a library, it is certainly a reading room. The beautiful, tasteful, not obtrusive furniture invites to quiet, leisurely discussions; the deep, comfortable chairs and low tables with their proper relations to lights induce thoughtful perusal of the books lying about, all of which appear to be read. On a larger table is an open French dictionary, and beside it in a chaise-longue DOROTHY is poring over a volume. She refers to the dictionary for the meanings of a few phrases, murmuring them half aloud to fix them in her mind. There is an atmosphere of refinement, quiet, contentment in the room. Perhaps if some members of the audience knew that most of the books are those which everybody cites by title yet seldom reads; or reading seldom thinks about; or thinking about seldom understands; and if they knew that DOROTHY is now trying to learn everything that Paul Bourget's "Essaies de Psychologie Contemporaine" contain, they would declare that the calmness of the house is merely apparent after all, and that as they would colloquially express it, "Something is going to hap-*

pen." At any rate it isn't going to happen over the telephone standing upon a table near the wall, for the first sound comes from without the door.]

MRS. PHILLIPS. Oh, Dot, are you there?

DOROTHY. Hello, Mother; yes, I'm here. Come right in.

[*She carefully inserts a long paper knife to mark her place, puts down her book and rises to go to the door.*]

MRS. PHILLIPS [*entering*]. Well, dear, it always looks so delightfully comfortable here. We all envy your taste in arranging this room.

[*She kisses her daughter warmly.*]

DOROTHY. Let me take your things [*helping with wraps and hat*]. Where's Father? Didn't he come with you?

MRS. PHILLIPS. Yes. But he's gone on to the club. He may call for me here later.

DOROTHY. Good. it will be charming to have you both here at once.

MRS. PHILLIPS. You're sure I didn't disturb you at something special?

DOROTHY. Quite certain, Mother; I was just reading some French again.

[*At the mention of French books Mrs. PHILLIPS changes a little. She doesn't approve of indiscriminate reading in Latin literature. She has recollections of long-ago sights in Paris.*]

MRS. PHILLIPS. Yes, I notice the dictionary. You are always so thorough, dear.

DOROTHY. You see, Mother, I always want to understand things. It's not easy to get to the bottom of ideas even in English, and French, while it is so easy to read, is actually difficult to understand exactly.

MRS. PHILLIPS. Yes, I've heard you say that before.

DOROTHY. I've just finished Bourget's story based on the war. Did you read it?

MRS. PHILLIPS. Let me see, did I? What would it be called in English?

DOROTHY. "The Night Cometh."

MRS. PHILLIPS. Yes, I remember the title now because it's like the hymn we sing in church. But I don't recall much about the story, although I suppose some Frenchman is in love with another man's wife.

DOROTHY. Yes, that's it. But it seemed to me so strange that a man with Bourget's fine powers of mind should so evidently turn to a thing called God at such a time as this. In the face of all the horrors in Europe, how can a man who has studied and thought and probed so deeply turn like a weakling to the lulling doctrines of an old worn-out creed?

MRS. PHILLIPS. Now, don't excite yourself, dear. We have discussed such matters before this and never come to any agreement.

DOROTHY. But a brain like Bourget's! [*Then more calmly.*] So to try to understand I turned to his earlier works. "Un Divorce" shows how a woman was forced by recurrent Catholicism to return to the husband she had divorced and admit she had never been the wife of her second husband. But that seemed to be merely a good story. Now I am trying to find out whether Bourget seriously believes this medieval mass of legends fit for ordinary and common people, but beneath the consideration of any sanely educated person.

MRS. PHILLIPS. You always were queer. I wonder where you got your strange ideas.

DOROTHY. Inherited them from grandmother, I suppose, with everything else of hers.

MRS. PHILLIPS. You may have got some from your father, but certainly none from me.

DOROTHY [*laughing*]. You're right, Mother; the world will always discharge you of any complicity in my opinions and sentiments.

MRS. PHILLIPS. I'm not so sure it does. And that gives me the opening I've been looking for to say something to you, Dorothy.

DOROTHY. So this isn't a friendly call after all? It's a family accounting. I was afraid of that, but I put it out of my mind, hoping you would be different this time. But it looked dangerous when you said Father would call for you here later.

MRS. PHILLIPS. He and I agree that I had better —

DOROTHY. Why, it's perfectly plain. You have arranged that he is to give you so much time to reprove me, or lecture me, and then when you have reduced me to the dutiful daughter stage he is to appear and benignly approve you and your work. Oh, you deliciously transparent old conspirators!

MRS. PHILLIPS. Please, Dorothy, do be serious.

DOROTHY [*with a quiet meaning*]. Very well, Mother, I shall be absolutely serious. Are you quite certain you want me to be?

MRS. PHILLIPS. Absolutely. I came here to speak to you quite seriously and truthfully. I hope you will be as confidential with me as I am with you.

DOROTHY [*soberly*]. And you want me to be quite truthful? To speak quite the truth? You know, Mother, that's a terribly risky thing.

MRS. PHILLIPS. Telling the truth is the first principle of religion!

DOROTHY. Yes, it is the first principle of religion, but isn't it the last practice of the religious?

MRS. PHILLIPS. I can't stop to find out what you mean by that. I want to talk to you about Charlton Brookes. [*Dorothy closes her eyes for a second and takes a deep breath. The ensuing discussion may be a painful one; but she feels a little disturbed, even slightly vindictive.*] You know what I mean. It's not that people are beginning to talk; they've been doing that for a long time. But now they are speaking to me quite openly about you two. It's grown beyond jokes and smiles, Dorothy. People are wondering why your father and I don't do something about it.

DOROTHY. So you speak to me only when the remarks begin to criticise you? [*She pauses.*] Remember, you stipulated only the truth.

MRS. PHILLIPS. We hoped it was only a passing fancy, an infatuation due to propinquity, and that nothing might come of it. So we said nothing. But now that people are hinting that we should do something, why we decided we'd better really talk quite plainly with you.

DOROTHY. You imply, however, that so long as nothing was said directly to you, you would not have taken the initiative in a move which the "they-sayers" have forced upon you? [*She pauses.*] It's to be the plain truth between us, Mother?

MRS. PHILLIPS. Since you put it so baldly and insist upon the truth, I suppose I'll have to say, yes.

DOROTHY [*retrospectively*]. I'm glad we're speaking so truthfully to each other, Mother, after all these years of intimacy without understanding, because it makes so much easier the things I shall have to say to you.

MRS. PHILLIPS. In a word, we want you to stop this—with Charlton Brookes.

DOROTHY [*quietly*]. That, plainly, I shall not do.

MRS. PHILLIPS [*bursting out*]. But, Dorothy, the affair has passed beyond the limits of veiled gossip. It's almost a scandal already. It will hurt your family terribly. I don't know what your father and I shall do if things go on like this.

DOROTHY. Oh, you'll go to church as usual on Sundays, lull your thoughts and opinions to sleep, cover your real selves with masks before the world, and then act exactly as you please all the other days.

MRS. PHILLIPS. You are right. My religion is a great deal of comfort to me.

DOROTHY. What a pity it can't be something more!

MRS. PHILLIPS. Why, what do you mean?

DOROTHY. Didn't your Great Leader say, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her?"

MRS. PHILLIPS. I never heard of such a thing! Why, Dorothy, what can you mean by such language? And to your own mother, too! I'm shocked.

DOROTHY. Not nearly so much as the rest of the truth is going to shock you. If it opens your mind permanently to things that are not dreamt of in your philosophy now, this truthful interview will not have been in vain.

MRS. PHILLIPS. But can you deny that Charlton Brookes loves you?

DOROTHY. Of course not. I'm proud to say he does.

MRS. PHILLIPS. But you won't go so far as to say you love him?

DOROTHY. Since you want the truth, let me tell you that I am even prouder to declare that I love him. He has loved me always, but I was trained to make a brilliant marriage. You and father trained me. So at twenty-one I married. What? An already wasted, uncontrolled, worn-out, old-young

man. For six years some remnants of your narrowing training kept me strictly, even in my thoughts, to a horrid sense of my contemptible duty. If you had asked me a year ago if I loved Charlton I should have told you no—truthfully no. But since then things have changed. My husband has been away for months in South America—business and rest, people think; but you know and I know that he has been trying to throw off lasting effects of habits continued long after we were married. Six years of it! Let me tell you, Mother, a girl of twenty-one grows quickly in six years of new and startling experiences. A few months ago he came back. Cured? Impossible. Reformed? Hopeless. Don't you see that I'm alone again tonight? That's usual, of course. But Mother, don't for an instant believe that Dorothy Hudson at twenty-seven is at all the same girl that Dorothy Phillips was at twenty-one.

MRS. PHILLIPS. It must have been hard, but you should be strong enough to endure such trials.

DOROTHY [*suddenly, clearly*]. Did you?

MRS. PHILLIPS. Why, what do you mean?

DOROTHY. "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast—"

MRS. PHILLIPS [*anxious to get into other channels*]. Even so, you should consider everything.

DOROTHY [*coming back to the theme*]. I must insist that you have no province of judgment in this circumstance.

MRS. PHILLIPS [*in spite of herself*]. Why not?

DOROTHY [*apparently irrelevantly*]. Children are difficult to educate, aren't they?

MRS. PHILLIPS [*now she is on firm soil*]. They certainly are.

DOROTHY. But not nearly so difficult as parents, eh?

MRS. PHILLIPS [*feeling the earth slide sidewise*]. Parents!

DOROTHY. I just said that I must insist that you have no province of judgment in this circumstance.

MRS. PHILLIPS [*somewhat nettled*]. And I said, why not.

DOROTHY. Because for years every one of your four children has known of your—I don't know the word for it, so I shall not particularize—with Mr. Frothingham.

MRS. PHILLIPS [*flecked on the raw*]. How dare you insinuate such a thing to your own mother?

DOROTHY [*quietly, icily*]. I am not insinuating. I am complying with your desire for truth. Has it ever struck you as peculiar that everyone of your children detests Mr. Frothingham? Have you never thought about the scathing things we have all said about him and his complacent family, all of whom know as well as we do?

MRS. PHILLIPS. People wouldn't dare speak of such things to my sons and daughters! That would be scandalous! What could anyone know? What could any of you children know for certain?

DOROTHY. Children hear and see a great many things in their homes which they do not entirely comprehend until later some dazzling eclairsissement illumines a long series of little circumstances. Then the mature person grasps the full significance of all that the child retained.

MRS. PHILLIPS [*not so confidently*]. And what do you know? What do you remember? On what do you base your surmises, that you accuse me, that you judge me?

DOROTHY. Let me correct you. I don't judge you. I am not even interested in your case. I am merely

trying to show you that you have no right to judge *me*.

MRS. PHILLIPS [*fearfully yearning for the cuts*]. But your details? What things have you and the other children learned?

DOROTHY. Why, in spite of all our teasing and entreaty, have you never allowed an extension to the telephone at home? Hasn't it always been because you were afraid one of us might answer and hear his voice at the other end? Or perhaps innocently or accidentally pick up the receiver while he was talking to you? Could you have had any other objection to what was so nearly a necessity in our house?

MRS. PHILLIPS. What else?

DOROTHY. Who has called you up every week day for years between half past eleven and noon? Oh, I'll admit he's been faithful to the requirements. But can you understand now that it has become an act of tacit decency in our household not to answer the ring of the telephone at that time of day? Don't you suppose every member of it marks your alacrity to reach the receiver? Haven't we for years heard the transparent untruth of your politely murmured "I believe that must be for me"? Why, the smallness of it extends even to the maids. A new one is instructed in the etiquette of the telephone by the others. Even we children joked about it among ourselves.

MRS. PHILLIPS. I must have been blind!

DOROTHY. Then your punctilious attention and politeness to Mrs. Frothingham, for whom your honest opinion is one of contempt and hate. Your actions before her have always belied your remarks about her.

MRS. PHILLIPS [*shrinking together*]. I've been an ostrich!

DOROTHY [*thoughtfully*]. Yes, I believe you have. You have stuck your head into the sand and believed no one could see what was going on under his eyes.

MRS. PHILLIPS. [*appealingly*]. But what could we do? I merely drifted! I couldn't decide anything!

DOROTHY [*quietly, yet convincingly*]. Then you must admit, that if you drifted; that if you couldn't decide for yourself in such circumstances, you certainly in all honest dealings have no right to try to decide for another woman now,—least of all when that woman is your own daughter, perhaps swayed by instincts and examples which you yourself gave to her.

MRS. PHILLIPS. Oh, that I should come to this at my age!

DOROTHY. Age seems to have very little to do with one's ideas and actions in real life. [*There is a pause. Mrs. Phillips has visibly shrunk. One almost sees the contraction of both body and mind. She does not cry. Tears could not bring any relief now. They may later when she is posing as a martyr before FROTHINGHAM. DOROTHY is not exalted, not "puffed up"; but quite evidently the truthful elucidation of their respective positions has pleased her. It has also cleared her mind, and impersonalized her feelings. She does not look at her mother, but seems disposed to return to her reading. Her hand is upon the volume of Bourget when the doorbell sounds below in the house. She puts the book down. But Mrs. Phillips has started as though shot. An agony of fear and apprehension darts from the motion of her body to the expression of her face and then on into the sound of her voice.*]

MRS. PHILLIPS. Your father!

DOROTHY. Yes.

MRS. PHILLIPS. What are you going to do? Tell him?

DOROTHY [*reassuringly*]. Of course not. I have no religion which forces me to tell disagreeable truths, so I'm at liberty to lie my soul into hell to protect the woman I care for. Don't tell him yourself.

MRS. PHILLIPS. Tell him myself?

DOROTHY. By your looks, your agitation. [*She goes to the door and calls.*] Hello, Father, Mother and I are up here. Come on up to us.

[*MRS. PHILLIPS recovers as much of her shattered equanimity as she can before her husband enters. When MR. PHILLIPS appears he shows by his marked surprise that he had expected DOROTHY to be the agitated person and his wife ready to hand over to him a penitent. It appears to him that his daughter is quite self-possessed. That immediately prevents him from being so. He endeavors to cover up his temporizing.*]

MR. PHILLIPS. Well, well, Dot; I'm glad to see you. How are you, anyhow?

DOROTHY. Oh, quite well, Father, as always.

MR. PHILLIPS. Got through with the club business in no time, Mary, so here I am long before I expected to be. I suppose you and Dot have had a good frank talk together? [*MRS. PHILLIPS gives him one look as though she would like to tell him all the varying aspects of that frank talk, but she quickly averts her eyes when she realizes what a strange part she would have to play in any open avowal.*]

MRS. PHILLIPS [*non-committally*]. Yes, Joel, we've talked frankly.

DOROTHY. Mother, if you want to see those lingerie gowns and underthings I had sent out on approval from Hickman's you might go up to my room now

to look at them. They are all spread out over everything. They may be called for tomorrow and you may not get another chance to examine them leisurely.

MRS. PHILLIPS. I certainly would like to, Dot. [*Though she feels as if she were a deserter in time of danger, she seizes this opportunity to avoid any frank conversation which DOROTHY may impose upon the unwary general. To make her more uncomfortable she cannot give him even a hint.*]

DOROTHY [*as Mrs. PHILLIPS goes out*]. You know where all the lights are, Mother. Just make yourself at home. The prices are on the garments. You might decide to order some for yourself.

MR. PHILLIPS [*seating himself rather pompously*]. Dot, did you send your Mother away purposely, or had you two really been discussing lingerie?

DOROTHY. Aren't clothes the best disguises women use to conceal their real selves from other women?

MR. PHILLIPS. Well, you can't say that about us men.

DOROTHY. No, for all of you dress exactly alike. Still, isn't that very consistency a capital mask? Sometimes I wonder whether that is the greatest cloak of hypocrisy, or whether it's respectability, or religion?

MR. PHILLIPS. [*The conversation has not started at all as he had planned.*] Let us talk of something else. I hope your Mother has told you why we came here tonight. I don't believe in beating about the bush, Dot. You know what I mean.

DOROTHY. Neither do I believe in beating about the bush, Father. Just what do you mean?

MR. PHILLIPS. You know as well as I do, what I mean. Your carrying-on with Charlton Brookes. Your Mother and I hoped it was only a passing

fancy, an infatuation due to your being thrown together so much. We hoped it would exhaust itself. Therefore we said nothing. But, bless my soul, people are beginning to speak right out about it as though everybody took it for granted. The men downtown dare to hint that I might do something with you. That made up our minds to speak to you about it.

DOROTHY. Well done, Father; only you and Mother shouldn't practice together. You have almost memorized her speech. It lacks spontaneity. You do much better when you go it alone. Mother has already delivered that speech to me.

MR. PHILLIPS. Then you must admit the reasonableness of all we say, all she has already said about this. Why, people are saying—

DOROTHY [*calmly*]. What?

MR. PHILLIPS [*lamely*]. All sorts of things.

DOROTHY. The "they-sayers" again!

MR. PHILLIPS. But just think of your family!

DOROTHY. They've never thought much about me. Let's see; there's Tom. In what sanitarium is he just now? He moves about so rapidly I can't keep track of him. And Duncan; dear old Duncan, the wildest of us all, I suppose; but there is something rather winning about him and his wildness. He may be the best of us all yet. Over there in France driving an ambulance under fire! I don't suppose what I do will matter much to him. Do you? And Grace has just established her legal residence in Maine, where the term is short, so that she can free herself from her matrimonial alliance. Why, Father, she can't care about us just now.

MR. PHILLIPS. Poor Grace!

DOROTHY. You can see her plight because of its

salient events; but there, I don't begrudge her your sympathy.

MR. PHILLIPS. That's neither here nor there, I want you to promise me that you'll break with Charlton Brookes at once.

DOROTHY. You have no right to ask such a thing of me.

MR. PHILLIPS. I? Your own father? No right? Why, my girl, do you realize what you are saying?

DOROTHY. Perfectly. And I contend that you have no province of judgment in this circumstance.

MR. PHILLIPS. Oh, pshaw! You're only a girl. You don't know what you're talking about.

DOROTHY. Let me see if I cannot induce you to respect my assertion. You will admit that when grandmother died and left me everything her affairs were rather badly tangled? [*He nods.*] You often complimented me on the way I managed them. Didn't I strive all these years to make my husband over into a reputable business man? [*He nods.*] And didn't I almost succeed? It's only a charitable institution, I know, but isn't it some responsibility to manage a hospital, where a year's expenditures total some fifty-two thousand dollars? So you see, Father, I merely claim as much consideration as a small business man might.

MR. PHILLIPS. But you're my daughter.

DOROTHY [*waving it aside*]. That has nothing to do with this.

MR. PHILLIPS. But I must assert some influence over you.

DOROTHY. That, unfortunately or fortunately, you can never do again.

MR. PHILLIPS. I'd like to know why not?

DOROTHY. Because in this matter you have no province of judgment.

MR. PHILLIPS. Now, seriously, Dorothy, will you kindly explain what you mean by that?

DOROTHY. You've had a great deal to do with the law in your business dealings, Father, so that you know all the usual underlying principles. You are aware that a plaintiff must come into court with clean hands. You know that not the slightest suggestion of insincerity must taint his actions. And above all he must not himself be open to the same accusation that he brings. You know all these things, don't you, Father?

MR. PHILLIPS. Well, I know all these things, of course; but what have they to do with you?

DOROTHY. You come to me with the repetitions of the things "the world is saying" with all the nasty undertone of scandalous implications, and though I am not going to admit any of the base details your charge against me and Charlton carries with it, I am going to stop you from making any assertion about my actions or uttering any judgment upon my choices. I shall impress upon you once and forever the limits beyond which you may not pass. This is what I am trying to make you see. You have no right to judge me!

MR. PHILLIPS. Why not?

DOROTHY. Because of poor little Mable Simpson! [MR. PHILLIPS *winces, turns color, shifts nervously, clears his throat.*] Are you surprised? Why, I've known for years what you made that pretty little girl go through. Don't all the men downtown know it? Aren't you a little flattered yourself when the men tease you about how you "were caught"? Of course you "made it all right," as you would describe it. You have money; she had all the attention she needed; she could be easily sent to another city to begin over again. But do you believe that covering

up the effects of such an affair clears you in the eyes of decent, right-thinking young women? Why, when your own sons could jest behind your back about your behavior with that poor girl, and throw out thinly-veiled allusions to the "governor's escapade" do you suppose the thing wouldn't come to our ears clearly some day? Oh, how I despise that kind of thing in a man! In our hospital I see the poor things in their teens, with mentalities of mere children still, victimized by adventuring good citizens who can discharge their conscience by making the matter square with the payment of trifling amounts of money!

MR. PHILLIPS. So you throw that into my face, do you?

DOROTHY. No! But I refuse to let you, with that page in your past, dare say anything derogatory about my attempt to free myself from the same kind of life! You have no right to prevent me from breaking away from the rottenness of it all! Oh, how I want to share in something clean, in something decent, in something noble! How I yearn to give my children, if I ever have any, noble recollections of their youth! How I long to bless their lives, instead of tainting their existence long before they are even born! And I shall, in spite of you all! You shall not stifle me! I shall have my own way; I know it is the right one!

MR. PHILLIPS [*springing up, livid with rage and virtuous indignation*]. So you dare to—

[*Just at this point MRS. PHILLIPS appears in the doorway. At the sight of her MR. PHILLIPS stops in full career, but he forgets to drop his upraised hand.*]

MRS. PHILLIPS [*advancing timidly*]. I heard your

voice, Joel; I was afraid you couldn't do anything with Dorothy.

[MR. PHILLIPS *realizes that his wife has heard only the last sentence of DOROTHY's remarks, so he proceeds to cover his feelings by using the indignation he has worked up over himself.*]

MR. PHILLIPS. So you dare to persevere in this? You refuse to drop this affair?

DOROTHY. [*pleasantly*]. Certainly, for the third time, I refuse.

MR. PHILLIPS. Well, there's one other thing I can do. [*He pauses.*]

DOROTHY. I'll help you out since you can't go on. What is that?

MR. PHILLIPS. I'll speak to Brookes himself. [*Working himself up.*] If you won't listen to reason, perhaps he will. He's allowed himself to slip into this relation, but no matter how far it has gone, he should have enough decency to call a stop. And I'll see him. I'll put the entire matter before him as one man to another! I suppose you'll have to abide by what he decides to do?

DOROTHY [*sweetly*]. Certainly; I shall have to. [*The telephone rings.*] You can put the entire case to him now. He's at the telephone. [MR. PHILLIPS *makes the pretense of starting forward. Unseen by him his wife moves to intercept him. But his bravado collapses. He stands still.*]

DOROTHY [*going to the telephone*]. I want you both to hear what I say to Charlton. [*The telephone rings again.*] Yes?—Perfectly well!—Quite happy! — Mother and Father are here. They have been trying to induce me to give you up—[*with a low, happy laugh*]. Nothing in the world could make me do that. Let me repeat your orders carefully.—You are to get two tickets for us on the first steamer to

Bordeaux. Yes; I know they do not publish sailing dates. But I can leave at an hour's notice. The first that sails.—Always, always!—*Jusqu'à demain. Mais comme je t'aime, bel ami! Au'voir!* [*She hangs up the receiver.*]

MRS. PHILLIPS. You are going to France with him!

DOROTHY. Yes, we have offered our services to the French government and we've both been accepted. Charlton will carry on his chemical investigations for France. And I—I shall always be near him from now on. It will make spicy gossip for your clubs, won't it, Mother?

MR. PHILLIPS. Well, of all the—

DOROTHY. And now, shall we all sit down and discuss bridge, or golf, or rising prices?

MR. PHILLIPS. Not by a long shot! I'm going home; and so are you, Mary.

MRS. PHILLIPS [*rather wistfully, for she feels a dawning admiration for this peculiar child of hers*]. Yes, Joel.

DOROTHY. That's too bad, for we might find so many things to discuss—in Bourget's stories, I mean.

MRS. PHILLIPS. Good night, Dorothy, dear.

DOROTHY. Good night, Mother. Good night, Father.

MR. PHILLIPS [*still maintaining his virtue*]. Humph! [*They go out. DOROTHY watches them with a sympathetic amused look. After they have left she picks up her book, glances at a page, lifts her eyes, and stands in happy reverie.*]

GEORGE SCARBOROUGH, PLAYWRIGHT



THE following paper is a brief account of the life of George Scarborough up to his recognition by the public as a playwright, together with a critical estimate of his work. His story, like that of many geniuses, is the story of a square peg in a round hole. I have tried to show something of the events and influences that have had most to do with shaping the hole to fit the peg. That I know my subject only through the eyes and minds of others is a disadvantage, and it is with apologies to Mr. Scarborough, for possible aberrations in my picture, that I present this little sketch.

George Scarborough first saw the light of day in Mineola, Wood County, Texas, 1875. But East Texas was too slow for him even at a most youthful age, and somewhere in the eighties his parents removed to Sweetwater, Nolan County, then one of the wildest parts of West Texas. West Texas then deserved the adjectives wild and woolly. The cowman and the ranger ruled the plains, and the wide prairies were still free to the long-horned steer. The Scarboroughs themselves came of southern and western fighting stock. One of the most famous of the Texas Rangers bore the name and his daring is a matter of history. Life in the western town of the period must have helped to bring out and strengthen in the child, George Scarborough, some of the traits remarkable in the man. Those who knew him at Sweetwater describe him as slight and wiry, "a little grasshopper of a fellow," active, fearless, and with

a small boy's endless capacity for play and mischief. He also had the normal boyish ambition to make money and a great deal of ingenuity in finding ways to do what he wished. He peddled vegetables on shares for a neighbor; he sold, to passing tourists, prairie dogs trapped by himself; one money-making scheme succeeded another.

In 1887 Judge Scarborough brought his family to Waco, Texas, and a few years later young George was attending Baylor University in that city. His school life was not an unqualified success. A well-deserved reputation of reckless daring brought him credit for many exploits in which he had had no share and he suffered accordingly. Brilliant if he cared to exert himself, he chose rather to spend his time in outwitting his instructors, so that his standing was not always high. There was one branch of his work, however, in which he excelled — the department of expression, which at that time, called the Lone Star School of Oratory, was under the direction of a Professor Franklin. Professor Franklin must have been a man of considerable power, for he seems to have inspired the boys under his influence with an ardent desire to become orators. A medal was offered every year to the best speaker in the school, and it is recorded that two years in succession George Scarborough wore the medal. The boy was also clever as a cartoonist and wished at one time to train himself as an artist. He did, in fact, paint a picture, but it excited such ridicule among his friends that he abandoned the idea of an artistic career. The picture, preserved by his mother, served as a screen before a fireplace in their home for many years.

The question then arose as to what profession or work in life the young man must choose. He himself

wished to become a writer. This idea his father strongly opposed; he had set his heart on making his boy a lawyer. The father's will prevailed, and after a year of study in the Texas State University, he passed the examinations, was admitted to the bar, and entered upon the practice of law with his father.

The brief period required by Mr. Scarborough to obtain access to the bar speaks highly for his ability and intellectual power. But he had become a lawyer to please his father rather than himself, and he found its humdrum practice deadly boredom. Restless and dissatisfied, he was out of his proper sphere and knew it. He did not prosper in the profession, perhaps because he spent too much time in tramping and hunting along the Bosque, and in 1902 he definitely withdrew from it.

In the meantime Mr. Scarborough had married Miss Anne Sanders, of Grimes County, Texas. Mrs. Scarborough had been a student in Baylor University and was admired and liked by all who knew her. She is, on the testimony of acquaintances, a woman of unusual poise and charm. It is not easy to estimate what her influence on Mr. Scarborough has been, but that it has been always present, a stimulating and balancing force, is hardly to be questioned. Since he had abandoned the law the question of a profession was again before him. He had a leaning toward the vaudeville stage, but the advice and protestations of his wife and mother kept him away from it. During the years he had written many stories, sketches, poems, all in a vein of satiric humor, none of which, except perhaps a burlesque poem or two in the Baylor Lariat, had ever been published.

It may have been with some memory of his boyhood triumphs of oratory that he determined to develop this gift of satire as a humorous lecturer. He

was at this time very thin, stooped, almost cadaverous, with blue-grey eyes and dark hair, really somewhat unprepossessing in appearance, as his friends admit. His first lecture was given at Baylor University and he advertised it with cards, on which was his own figure, but headless, and underneath it the announcement of his subject, "Jolts and Caresses." To make one's maiden effort in such a venture before an audience of friends and neighbors must have been somewhat trying, but Mr. Scarborough's running satire on men and affairs seems to have been well received. He afterwards went on a lecture tour under the auspices of a Chicago bureau. The trip was not a success, and he came back convinced that Mark Twain need never fear for his laurels on George Scarborough's account.

The next few years were spent in various ventures, all of them more or less unsatisfactory and of which it would be difficult to give a definite account. Indeed, according to his friends, so many are the things that he did and the places that he went to that, unless Mr. Scarborough be blessed with the notebook habit or a card-indexed memory, he himself might well find it a hard matter to recall them in order. But he had now determined to leave Waco and Texas for good. He felt sure that his unusual ability as stenographer and reporter would prove a steppingstone to higher things in New York. This change was delayed for some time on account of Judge Scarborough's last illness, during which his son remained in Waco. Some time after his father's death in 1905 conditions seemed favorable and the little family made the great move.

The removal to New York was the turning point in George Scarborough's life. Arrived there, he first did stenographic work. Then he was a reporter on

the New York American. Later he took part in the investigation of the New York State Attorney's office and was active in one of the great White Slave investigations. The reports of the investigating committees recall the trite old adage that "truth is stranger than fiction."

As an officer of the secret service in one of these investigations Mr. Scarborough's daring and quickness brought him distinct success. But out of this work came more than skill as a detective; from it came the inspiration and the material for his real success—playwriting. His first play, *The Lure*, produced in 1912, took the public by storm and set the critics by the ears. Following it came *At Bay* and *What Is Love?* In 1914 Mr. Scarborough's plays were running in three different New York theaters at the same time, a thing almost unprecedented in the annals of the theater. Since the first three he has written *The Last Resort* and *The Heart of Wetona*. He has also written a play called *Fate Decides* in collaboration with U. S. Lawrence. At present he is working on a Chinese play to be produced shortly by David Belasco.

The Lure was the first and best of the white slave plays, and was popular from its first appearance. The impressions gained in his secret service experience must have been fresh in Mr. Scarborough's mind, and this play presents a picture, terrible in its realism, of which he knew every detail from first-hand knowledge.

The main scene in the play is laid in a brothel, and because of this a certain school of critics fell upon it tooth and toenail. Every adjective in the vocabulary of the prurient was heaped upon it; it was attacked from the standpoint of morality, technique, and characterization, yet because of its vividness, power

and dramatic truth, the people flocked to see it. Above this popularity lies the importance of the play as a blow at dramatic conventions. American drama is admittedly more conventional than that of any other nation, and George Scarborough by his daring and sincere treatment of scenes and subjects hitherto taboo did yeoman's service in the cause of the shackled drama. Such a play as *The Lure* helps to emphasize the truth that morality depends not on subject matter but on the "integrity and sanity of mind with which it is set forth." A host of salacious imitations followed *The Lure*, but most of them lacked the high purpose that characterized the first play and deserve to the utmost the criticism they brought forth. For a while the stage seemed flooded with scenes of the gutters—plays written to appeal by their suggestiveness, but *The Lure* must not be classed with these purely commercial dramas.

Mr. Scarborough's next play, *At Bay*, a rather impossible melodrama, is redeemed by clever characterization. The dialog is good and the element of suspense is well worked out. It deserved its popularity as a piece of skillful workmanship. This play was followed by *What Is Love*, which involved in a somewhat frivolous form a really serious question. The heroine is confronted with the necessity of choosing between two lovers, for both of whom she cares. All advise her to marry the one she really loves, but she asks, "What is love?" and no one is able to give her a satisfactory answer. The girl's perplexity and final decision are worked out in an entertaining manner. *The Last Resort*, produced next in order, was more artificial, a satiric travesty on politics and politicians, which lasted just two weeks on Broadway. Of *Fate Decides* I know nothing of note.

The Heart of Wetona is Mr. Scarborough's latest play. The evolution of this play to its present form is of some interest. The scene was originally laid in a New England parish and under the name of *The Girl* as a sordid story of commonplace people was foredoomed to failure. Rewritten, the scene laid in an Indian reservation, and the production staged by David Belasco, *The Heart of Wetona* became a very fair example of high-class melodrama. Belasco predicted that it would be the great American play, taking a place among dramas, perhaps, like that achieved by *The Girl of the Golden West* among operas. But although it was favorably received by the critics at its inception, its New York run was comparatively short.

George Scarborough is still a young man, and the age in which most men of genius have achieved their best is yet before him. Great as his success has been, one cannot but hope and believe that his finest work is to come—work that will attain something of the ideal of the drama—"the revealing of the permanent realities of life." What he has done already is promise for the future. Fame has brought disaster to many playwrights, who with the first taste of it have gone in, forthwith, for yachts and palaces to the neglect of the drama. Mr. Scarborough has taken his prosperity simply and sanely, and we are glad to call him not only a success but a man of promise.

MADLINE SKINNER.

MARGARET OGILVY AND BARRIE'S HEROINES

When you looked into my mother's eyes you knew, as if He had told you, why God sent her into the world—it was to open the minds of all who looked to beautiful thoughts. And that is the beginning and end of literature.—J. M. Barrie in *Margaret Ogilvy*.



HE theater season is over, and I who have been a frequent attendant feel that Barrie has been the best dramatist of all. There follow a summer's lectures on Contemporary European Drama; Barrie is scarcely mentioned, but I am of the same impression still. Superficial searching for the cause of my feeling has led to but the easy conclusion of my voluble neighbor in the Empire, "It's just Barrie." But is it just Barrie?

Pleasing memories recur. A box-party of children across the theater laugh merrily at Miss Thing. The would-be Cinderella has reached them even if she can't persuade Mr. Bodie or her romantical policeman. Then comes the human Kate to bewilder Sir Harry with her "*Twelve-Pound Look*." "I couldn't endure it. If a failure had come now and then—but your success was suffocating me." We sympathize with Lady Sims as she admires Kate's contented face, "I thought she looked so alive." A shift of scene, and *The Old Lady Shows Her Medals*. Those intimate pictures—the unexpected proposal, the touching farewell, the silent close are as beautiful and noble in memory today as on the stage when I saw them weeks ago. They were real then. They

are real now. The charm? Is it Barrie or Barrie's heroines?

Whether it is the Barrie heroines, or the Barrie heroine is a question. Turn with me, you who are curious, the pages of *Margaret Ogilvy*, Barrie's own story of the life of his mother. Here in the chapter, *My Heroine*, is Barrie's own answer.

"When it was known that I had begun another story, my mother might ask what it was to be about this time.

"'Fine; we can guess who it is about,' my sister would say pointedly.

"'Maybe you can guess, but it is beyond me,' says my mother, with the meekness of one who knows that she is a dull person.

"My sister scorned her at such times. 'What woman is in all his books?' she would demand.

"'I'm sure I canna say,' replies my mother determinedly. 'I thought the women were different every time.'

"'Mother, I wonder you can be so audacious! Fine you know what woman I mean.'

"'How can I know? What woman is it?'

"'I won't give you the satisfaction of saying her name. But this I will say: it is high time he was keeping her out of his books.'

"And then as usual my mother would give herself away, unconsciously. 'That is what I tell him,' she says chuckling, 'and he tries to keep me out, but he canna; it's more than he can do.'"

Later when the family has retired to the mother's room to listen to what the day has drawn from Barrie's pen, Margaret Ogilvy, shaking with mirth, smothers a gurgling sound.

"'That's a way to behave!' cries my sister.

"'I canna help it!' my mother gasps.

“‘And there’s nothing to laugh at.’

“‘It’s that woman,’ my mother explains unnecessarily.

“‘Maybe she’s not the woman you think her,’ I say, crushed.

“‘Maybe not,’ says my mother doubtfully. ‘What was her name?’

“‘Her name,’ I answer with triumph, ‘was not Margaret.’

“‘But this makes her ripple again. ‘I have so many names nowadays,’ she mutters.”

Has Barrie, then, just one heroine, and is this heroine Margaret Ogilvy?

We who have known the Barrie heroine under any name have felt her irresistible charm. Simple, lovable, loving, quaintly humorous, she has won her sympathy by some little slight of fancy. At once realistic and romantic, she deludes us with her innocent fun and pulls at our heart strings with her noble pathos. As fragile Margaret Dishart her gentle mother love keeps our affection; Jean Myles amazes us but convinces us that she is real; Jess is frankly cute; bewildering Babbie grows tame and submits to convention; Miss Thing fancies that she is Cinderella; Columbine makes merry for us all as well as for Pantaloon; honest, wholesome Kate, with “her twelve-pound look,” is admirably human; our eyes well up with tears we must not shed at mere thought of Mrs. Dowey and her medals; and at Margaret Ogilvy’s smothered gurgle we suppress our own laughter lest we miss some of her rippling mirth. Barrie’s heroine is motley colored and motley named, though she represent many persons in one goddess.

I find it difficult to think of Margaret Ogilvy apart from her son, James Matthew Barrie, and why should I separate them in discussion when in life

they were ever together? "What she had been, what I should be, these were two great subjects in my boyhood, and while we discussed the one, we were deciding the other, though neither of us knew it."

Barrie was the second son of this simple, loving Scotch woman of "Thrums," but David, the older, died before Barrie's sixth year and left a permanent sorrow in the mother's heart. Childishly human seem the attempts of the younger brother to take the place of David in the mother's mind and affections. Once he practiced in secret a whole week only to find at the end that he was still rather like himself. Though with the years he came to fill this place more completely, the mother love always bore the scar, even after it ceased to nurse the wound. "That," wrote Barrie quaintly, "was how my mother got her soft face."

As Barrie grew older he and Margaret Ogilvy were more like brother and sister than mother and son. Each was deeply interested in every concern of the other. Evidently one was as surprised as the other to find that *Arabian Nights* were not Knights and equally resented paying the public library fee to read so unromantic a story. *A Day of Her Life*, which for us reads *A Day of Their Lives*, presents as odd and lovable a picture as one expects in a Barrie novel or a Barrie play. It is early morning; they are asleep in adjoining rooms; all at once out of Margaret Ogilvy's bed pops a head and instantly a person. Softly and quickly she patters into Barrie's room with a greeting "and bare-footed!" Was she not to stay in bed until the fire was lighted? Back she is led with a whisk through the airy chamber to her warm bed, where she humbly promises to stay but to which she may more humbly have to return a few moments later.

The day advances; a letter from Stevenson comes in the morning mail; an impulsive little woman has sought refuge upstairs; will she not come down to hear the letter? Ah, jealous! And the exulting lad leaping up the stairway with his treat discovers the trouble: Stevenson has written better books than he.

It is a year or two earlier than this. Margaret Ogilvy is entertaining some of Thrums at tea. Into the room rushes the excited James from a visit to his friend the tailor. Somehow she has excused herself from the group and is listening to his breathless quotation from Cowley:

“What can I do to be forever known
And make the age to come my own?”

What could he do? Did she tell him then? Perhaps not; but from that day date his ambition and his inspiration. “She who stood with me on the stair that day was a very simple woman, accustomed all her life to making the most of small things, and I weaved sufficiently well to please her, which has been my only steadfast ambition since I was a little boy.”

For eighteen months Barrie had mailed journalistic articles to London before the thought came to him that there was something quaint about his native place. Then he wrote *The Auld Licht Papers*. Margaret Ogilvy thought that an editor who would accept such sketches must be unbalanced; she even contemplated calling on him. As for her own reception of the sketches; when Barrie was picturing her showing them proudly to all Thrums, she was in reality stowing them away in a bandbox on the garret stairs.

But Margaret Ogilvy was always Barrie's most sympathetic friend. She was his inspiration, his model, and his critic. For instance, Barrie has been

smiling, laughing and jeering with the characters he has been creating. The mother had ventured that writing is not so pleasant a task as ironing. "No, for one bannocks is the marrows of another, while chapters —" and then perhaps her eyes twinkle and she says saucily, "but, Sal, you may be right, for sometimes your bannocks are as like as mine!" Money meant much to her. "In the old days when an article arrived she did not read it at once; she first counted the lines to see what we should get for it."

It was in this quiet home with this loving, charming mother that Barrie learned to know people and to put them into his books. In his own words, "You only know the shell of a Scot until you have entered his home circle. . . . Then he is self-revealing in the superlative degree. . . . And as knowledge is sympathy, the affection existing between them is almost painful in its intensity. . . . They are reputed niggardly, but for family affection at least they pay in gold. In this, I believe, we shall find the true explanation why Scotch literature, since long before the days of Burns, has been so often inspired by the domestic hearth and has treated it with a passionate understanding." Here Barrie analyzes his own secret. He makes real literature of his pictures of Scotch domestic life because he has himself lived that life, paying for family affection in gold. Of the mother's appreciation when she was on her death-bed he writes "They had told her I was on my way home, and she said, with a confident smile, 'He will come as quick as trains can bring him.' That is my reward, that is what I have got for my books." There was Barrie, the artist, securing his reward in life. Margaret Ogilvy was to receive hers in his art, appearing and reappearing on his stage.

With Margaret Ogilvy for a model the Barrie

heroine could not be other than an impulsive, modestly independent person. Invariably she deludes us in some slyly humorous way. She is always quick of movement. Simple, gentle, affectionate, she wins our love at once. Sometimes we see her in person as in *The Little Minister*. Sometimes her most prominent traits pop out in a more worldly heroine. Sometimes the incidents of her life recur before us; a mother grieves for her lost son; two or three desire their sons to be ministers; a plain Scotch woman boasts of possessing six horse-hair chairs. Others long for pretty cloaks, and another hops out of bed bare-footed on cold mornings to be reproved by her family. Simple incidents—hardly incidents at all you are saying—but the happy little events, nevertheless, that make up the everyday life of a simple but delightful Scotch woman.

Traits of character and events from the life of Margaret Ogilvy have made Barrie's heroines very real. Pages of books and scenes on the stage have been glimpses of real life. Says Jenny Geddes, aged eleven, of the baby that was the profligate's, "Sometimes she sleeps and sometimes she wakes up. I never see such a baby." But we have in the world outside seen just such a baby more than once, and our pleasure is the pleasure of recognition.

Let us turn now to the different heroines. Are they individual, or are they copies of Margaret Ogilvy?

Margaret Dishart in *The Little Minister* is more wholly like Margaret Ogilvy than any other woman I have discovered in the Barrie plays. She is impulsive and in a small way independent. She has her fun in sly tricks of deception. Gentle, proud, and generous, she, too, finds her ideal in her son. Like the real Margaret, she wants her son to enter the

ministry — the calling that appears most worthy to all Barrie's women. The mother love is Margaret Dishart's strongest quality just as it was Margaret Ogilvy's, and in this case it is spent upon a son Gavin who is but a reincarnation of Barrie himself.

To portray these closely modeled characters Barrie very naturally borrowed incidents from his own home life. Margaret Ogilvy had never cared much for food. In the family different little games were continuously practised to get her to eat what she needed for sustenance. Always she would pretend that she had already eaten, and always she was found out. Note the little scene between Margaret Dishart and Gavin.

There was not always a good meal for two, yet when Gavin reached home at night there was generally something ready for him, and Margaret had supped "hours ago." Gavin's hunger urged him to fall to, but his love for his mother made him watchful.

"What did you have yourself, mother?" he would demand, suspiciously.

"Oh, I had a fine supper, I assure you."

"What had you?"

"I had potatoes, for one thing."

"And drippings?"

"You may be sure."

"Mother, you're cheating me. The dripping hasn't been touched since yesterday."

"I dinna — don't — care for dripping — so much."

Then would Gavin stride the room fiercely, a queer little figure.

"Do you think I'll stand this, mother? Will I let myself be pampered with dripping and every delicacy while you starve?"

"Gavin, I really dinna care for dripping."

"Then I'll give up my classes, and we can have butter."

"I assure you I'm not hungry. It's different wi' a growing laddie."

"I'm not a growing laddie," Gavin would say bitterly; "but mother, I warn you that not another bite passes my throat till I see you eating, too."

So Margaret had to take her seat at the table and, when she said, "I can eat no more," Gavin retorted, sternly, "Nor will I, for fine I see through you."

Perhaps food was a little less plentiful with the Disharts than the Barries, but aside from the condition the scene is as characteristic of the one group as of the other.

Each woman was exceedingly active; each physically fragile; each with a tremendous amount of nervous energy, which she spent in household cares, one of the chief of which was sewing. "Everything a woman's fingers can do," Barrie wrote of Mrs. Dishart, "Margaret did better than most," and of Mrs. Barrie that there was no garment she could not make once she had glimpsed the model. The vanity of each woman is sensed in her attitude toward her hats. Margaret Ogilvy was enraged if anyone said her last year's bonnet would do without alteration. Margaret Dishart whispers to the young minister as he takes her arm: "Gavin, do you think this bonnet sets me?"

Chary of her home intimacies each woman shrank from the idea of having an intruding servant. A panic in the house would scarce persuade Margaret Ogilvy she must employ an outsider to spare her dear family. In the novel Gavin one day found his mother wondering how she should set about getting a cup of tea in a house that had a servant in it. Then to show her much as Barrie had shown his mother,

Gavin boldly rang the bell, and the willing Jean answered it so promptly that Margaret was as much startled as Aladdin the first time he rubbed his lamp.

You who remember how active Margaret Ogilvy was in the cool of the early morning will appreciate the sketch of the little minister's trial.

About six o'clock Margaret sat up suddenly in bed with the conviction that she had slept in. . . . Her part on waking was merely to ring her bell, and so rouse Jean, for Margaret had given Gavin a promise to breakfast in bed and remain there till her fire was lit. Accustomed all her life, however, to early rising, her feet were usually on the floor before she remembered her vow, and then it was but a step to the window to survey the morning.

Each mother cared for her son's every interest; each had aspired to the ministry for him; each watched his days of study with zealous, loving care; each was the source of inspiration as the young men went out into the world; each was concerned about her own permanent place in her son's heart and jealously guarded against the arrival of another queen. We saw how conscious Margaret Ogilvy was of her reign. Here in two passages Barrie shows how Margaret Dishart fared with Gavin.

"Ah, Gavin, I'm thinking I'm the reason you pay so little regard to women's faces. It's no natural."

"You've spoilt me, you see, mother, for ever caring for another woman. I would compare her to you, and then where would she be?"

"Sometime you'll think differently."

"Never!"

Later they have been talking of Gavin's marrying.

"Whoever pleased you, Gavin, would content me," Margaret ventured to maintain. "You would only take to a clever woman."

"She must be nearly as clever as you, mother."

"Hoots, Gavin!" said Margaret smiling. "I'm not to be caught with chaff. I am a stupid, ignorant woman."

But each frail mother was shielded from the world as lovingly by the son as he would care for the younger woman of his choice. The sons of Barrie's women are always gallant like that. "For Margaret was as one who goes to bed in the daytime and wakes in it, and is not told that there has been a black night while she slept." Each son had his full reward as did Jamie in *A Window in Thrums*.

"At all my days on this earth, be they short or long, I've you for a staff to lean on."

"Ah, many years, Jess, have gone since then, but if Jamie be living now he has those, he has still those words to swallow."

The second character most like Margaret Ogilvy is found in the undramatized novel, *A Window in Thrums*. Because of the strong similarity to the model we must look at her briefly. None of Barrie's early women had had schooling, but they were ladies born; Jess, however, was illiterate. She was an invalid who found her chief interest in the career of her son. Deep family affection had enriched her life, and she was gentle. Much the same play acting as the Margarets engaged in filled her days. Their fun seemed spontaneous enough, but Jess's seems even more genuine.

Jess put her hand fondly through Jamie's ugly hair. How handsome she thought him.

"Ye have a fine brow, Jamie," she said. "I mind the day ye was born sayin' to mysel' at ye had a fine brow."

"But ye thocht he was to be a lassie, mother," said Leebie.

"Na, Leeby, I didna. I kept sayin' I thocht he would be a lassie because I was fleid he would be; but a' the time I had a presentiment he would be a laddie."

Incidents and interests of her life are the incidents and interests of Margaret Ogilvy's. The son Joey whom she has lost fills her mind as much as did David, Margaret Ogilvy's; his memory has left a similar imprint on her soul. There is the christening robe which she cherishes fondly but graciously lends to all the neighborhood. Her best chairs concern her, too. Money was none too plentiful for her, either; she looked forward to what Jamie would send each month as eagerly as Margaret Ogilvy had counted the number of lines in Barrie's news sketches. Nor was wearing apparel Jess's least concern. A neighbor has just passed the window.

"'Dinna tell me," said Jess. "I ken by her wy o' carryin' herself at she never had a jacket like that afore!"

There it was again, the inevitable cloak of the Barrie women, and the vanity that makes them so human.

In these two portrayals Margaret Ogilvy appears most completely. The "realest" mother-son relationship, however, is that of the salute in one-act, *The Old Lady Shows Her Medals*, in which there are no blood ties at all. Private Dowey storms into the humble sitting room; the timid Mrs. Dowey stands her ground. The scene is a series of attacks and repulses. The woman is the better armed with food as her weapon. Finally the masculine yields to the feminine completely, and Mrs. Dowey is triumphant. We are happy but not quite content when he grants her the privilege of calling him son before the charwomen; she deserves more reward than that. When

they return from the walk, she with the trench-ordered "chiffon" around her neck, with a Barrie-adored, neighbor-envied coat on her back and another on her arm, we rejoice, for her case is strong, and when Private Dowey proposes to her to be his mother, we find ourselves swallowing hard and looking away. No farewell in life could be "realer" than that. With eyes that will not be dried we see that sweet, soft-faced old lady silently show her son's medals at the close. Nowhere in war-time literature does anything touch more intimately; nowhere is there a better mother. "So far as the old lady and her 'son' go," writes Mr. Walkley in the *London Telegraph*, "the piece is pure gold, perfectly wrought."

In this play Barrie's art is well-nigh perfect. Save for the episode of the coat there is no incident borrowed from the real mother's life; there is no familiar little habit; there is no favorite chair; and there is no family joke. Mrs. Dowey indulges in no sly humor. But the heroine of *The Old Lady Shows Her Medals* is Margaret Ogilvy on trial. All superficialities are gone. The mother love of a proud, simple woman is on test, and of itself she makes it withstand the fire. In the same situation one feels that Margaret Ogilvy would have done the same.

With Mr. Bodie we cannot help liking Cinderella or Miss Thing: "she is so extraordinarily homey." In the stage directions of the text of *A Kiss for Cinderella*, Barrie describes her thus:

"She is obviously a drudge with something of a slavey 'touch.' Her hair is tied up in a wisp which shows her at her worst. But though a shabby little servant girl, she is clean; though a true cockney in voice and manner, a vague natural refinement tones down both voice and manner. The general effect of

her at first sight is a mixture of practical energy and wistfulness. . . . She has a fine forehead and eyes and an imagination of an uncommonly high order. Take her hand, and the heat of it would set you wondering whether despite her homeyness she is in a fever, or burning inside with some great idea."

I do not intend to show that Barrie modeled Miss Thing after Margaret Ogilvy. She is not a reproduction of the mother, but unconsciously the artist son borrowed some of the mother's traits. Into every really admirable heroine he must put some of the qualities that were those of his ideal. Miss Thing is fragile in body but strong-minded and independent. She plays as much with her fellow characters as Jess or either Margaret did in her home. The mother instinct is there; the love may not be quite so deep as that of a real mother for her own children, but one questions whether any of Barrie's "real mothers" would have been generous enough to care for war babies.

A few of Barrie's other women group themselves together because of slighter resemblance to the mother. Their relation might well be that of daughters. First there is Babbie, the real daughter-in-law of Margaret Dishart. Wild and proud and independent, she amazes us and wins us at once. Just the boldness that would have been her undoing Barrie leaves out of her make-up. Her impulsiveness is vital. Underneath, she is generous and gentle. It is this womanliness that binds her to Margaret Ogilvy.

Kate of *The Twelve Pound Look* is more the modern woman. She acts a decisive part in the problem play. She must be independent; she is admirably human. She knows what real love is, but has discovered its nature through a mistaken marriage. In

the sympathy she shows for "Sir" Harry she is the modern, big-hearted daughter of gentle Margaret Ogilvy.

Columbine is a loving daughter. Seen only in a world of fancy she radiates brightness. But Columbine is playful. She must engage in innocent fun. The little trick of dodging the policeman reminds one of Miss Thing's first meetings with her policeman. But Miss Thing was really concerned about her policeman. Columbine is wholly absorbed with her feelings about hers. Columbine was more like a grand-daughter to Margaret Ogilvy than a daughter, for might it not be in the third generation that a Margaret Ogilvy could become so reconciled to food as this:

"It is being almost too intimate to tell that Columbine hated sausages. . . . But like a loving child she never told her hate, eating her own bravely, when she must, but concealing it in the oddest places when she could."

Perhaps fancy has run afar in suggesting such relationship between these characters of Barrie's. Surely, however, the last three have not borne the same close resemblance as did the first four. All of them were independent, high-minded women. Each was impulsive; each was loving; each knew how to practise innocent delusion.

From the novels we gather another group of women. In *Auld Licht Idyls* Barrie describes his first landlady as an invalid but a sweet, pure woman who had her wishes been horses would have sold them to keep a minister herself. Jean Myles, the mother of Sentimental Tommy, is a proud woman, whose deception leads to tragedy. Her letter to Esther, however, is as humorous as if Margaret Ogilvy had written it. Poverty-stricken and heart-

broken as she was, she boastingly pretended she had six hair-bottomed chairs. Grizel, of *Tommy and Grizel*, is an impulsive, independent girl who seems to one as vital as she did to Tommy. These women of the novels are all very like the women of the Barrie plays.

There are a few unrelated, less admirable women, though, that creep into Barrie's art now and then. Among them are Lillian Gleason of *Half an Hour*, Rosalind of *Rosalind*, Emily Ross of *The Will*, Phoebe Throssel of *Quality Street*, Lucy White of *The Professor's Love Story*, Leonora of *The Legend of Leonora*, and Mrs. Torrance of *The New Word*. Each is interesting, as characters go, but they are all types. They lack real charm. They have in them none of Margaret Ogilvy.

What now of the heroine? Is it the Barrie heroines, or the Barrie heroine? I think it is both. For the heroines of all the better work, the typical Barrie work, the author had but one model, his mother, Margaret Ogilvy. Yet these women of the dramas and the novels are not merely type women. They are not reprints of the playwright's model mother. They are individuals of similar temperaments and similar tastes but with differentiating traits. We do not confuse Margaret and Kate and Mrs. Dowey of the plays any more than we do Maude Adams and Ethel Barrymore and Beryl Mercer of the stage. They are like the individual members of a large family with a common inheritance.

That common inheritance is their charm. "What is charm?" asked one of the characters in *What Every Woman Knows*.

"It is a kind of bloom on a woman which some women have for many men, which most women have for one man, and which some women have for none."

And later Maggie bares naked the heart of the Barrie woman when she says of the bloom that if a woman has it she needs nothing else in the world, and if she has it not, nothing else in the world is of any use.

The heroines with their bloom have made the Barrie plays and novels. We cannot conceive of *A Kiss for Cinderella* without Miss Thing; of *The Little Minister* without Margaret; of the *Medals* without the Old Lady; or of *The Twelve Pound Look* without Kate any more than we can think of Barrie the artist without Margaret Ogilvy, the model. Through her he became familiar with all the tremulous, delicate intimacies of human nature that every woman knows, but that most men glimpse only in moments of exalted sympathy with some wise women whom they love. Barrie has excelled in his portrayal of women; he knows things for the unutterable reason—"because."

Reviewers have noted other things than the projection of the dramatist's own personality in his plays. They like his simplified but real theater. They praise his mastery of unity and moment. They commend his substitution of situation for verbal wit. They think that the Thrums note rings true. They recognize the theme of his best works to be what every woman knows. Their remarks are casual but appreciative.

Students of the contemporary drama do not pay much heed to our Scotch-Englishman. His fanciful creations are not plays—not real plays. Busy with the investigation of the many problems of the modern drama, they are blind to the art of one who has no need of "modern movements." In our summer lectures on contemporary European drama, Barrie was mentioned once. In Mr. Frank W. Chandler's

Aspects of Modern Drama, in which the author analyses two hundred-odd plays, no work of Barrie's is even listed. Other writers are as indifferent to his charms. George Bernard Shaw is even contemptuous. "The popular stage," he asserts, "is a playground to Mr. Barrie's genius. He does everything as if he liked it and does it very well. He has no eye for human character, but he has a keen sense of human qualities. He cheerfully assumes that one endearing quality implies all endearing qualities and one repulsive, all repulsive."

Shaw and Barrie have little in common, but their period and their native Great Britain. Shaw is distinctively of the age; Barrie promises as encouragingly to be of all time.

Barrie may pay a "penalty." His followers are women and children and poets; but there may be something of the poet in all of us, for no reviewer seems to have applauded a superior number of men in a Shavian audience. The difference between Barrie and Shaw, too, is typical of the difference between Barrie and all the modern dramatists. He creates life; they, for the most part, discuss it, directly or indirectly. Even their heroines represent, not life, but some problem of life.

The reviewers, saner, more unbiased friends of literature than the students of modern drama, have hailed Barrie in the different seasons as one of the few literateurs. In 1896 A. T. Quiller-Couch ranked his genius with Kipling's and Olive Schreiner's.

The relation of Barrie's reputation and his rank to the heroines of his plays and stories, to Margaret Ogilvy may not seem immediately evident through these last paragraphs. Because I have tried to show how the heroines made the better work and how their creation was influenced by Margaret Ogilvy, I

have wanted to call attention further to the effect on Barrie's position in the drama and in literature. Only that could justify this long study of his characters and explain my own first insistent impression of him.

Barrie has delineated character — drawn real men and women — mostly women — from all the walks of life. Things, thoughts, acts, and persons appear in exquisite reality. Over them all falls a charm which Sir Quiller-Couch has called the Thrums note.

"I cannot offer to define that note exactly, but love of home will be found in it, and of the hearth, and of the worn faces of kinsfolk, and of all things homely; and a sense of tears and of the heroism of obscure lives; and an exile's regret, lingering upon trifles; and the smile of one who knows better, and the sigh of one who knows better still."

And the one who knew better and the one who knew better still for Barrie was Margaret Ogilvy. The love and the smile and the sigh and the sense of tears were hers. And her reward? Let me quote it for you again from the opening chapter of his story of her life.

"When you looked into my mother's eyes you knew, as if He had told you, why God sent her into the world—it was to open the minds of all who looked to beautiful thoughts. And that is the beginning and end of literature."

CORA DOLBEE.

A LIFE PLAY OF THE FUTURE

BY BERTRAM BLOCH

It is customary to give to the world after an author's death his hitherto unpublished works. In consequence the poor man misses all the praise—posthumous works always are praised—that is bestowed upon these efforts. Why not, then, since we know not when Death will come, avoid this difficulty and publish a writer's works before he is born? I realize that there is much to be said against this procedure, but I do think it is worth a trial. As an experiment, then, I am publishing the following excerpts from a play of a future master of the drama, Suburban Vague.

LIFE

BY SUBURBAN VAGUE

Mr. Vague will be a romanticist. He will revolutionize the drama by carrying out the prophecies of Gordon Craig and Pilar Morin, doing away forever with the use of words in the romantic drama. The following play will be one of his earlier works. Already in this the great master is beginning to find words unnecessary, using them merely as a signal to the stage manager to lower the curtain.

[There is no orchestra nor yet chimes nor trumpets. When it is time for the play to begin, the house lights are dimmed and the theater is flooded with a soft amber light. This gives place to a faint blue, gradually deepening until the house is dark.]

The curtain rises, disclosing the kitchen of the Wiff home. The walls are of white marble, broken in two places by long stained glass windows. One of the windows is open and through it one glimpses a vast blue sky with little shoals of white slow-moving clouds in it. There are two doors in the kitchen, both a delicate green. On one door is fastened a white rod and on this rod hang many multi-colored fabrics. They are wash-cloths. On one side is an electric stove, a soft pastel blue; on the other the sink, the same color. Margaret, the cook, the heroine of the play, wears a dress the color of the doors. Her hair is a dull bronze. She is filling blue soup plates with orange soup. As she fills the third soup plate, Mr. Wiff, her employer enters. He wears a pink suit which clashes with the colors of the kitchen. He brings discord into that place. Mr. Wiff, fingering a red tie, stands irresolute at the door a moment, then he advances into the room.]

MR. WIFF [*sadly*]. Margaret, you served the blue-points in purple dishes. You're fired!!

[*Curtain.*]

ACT TWO.

This act does not advance the play very much, but Mr. Vague will write it in to display his genius. And after all, when one has genius what matters technique?

[*The scene is the home of the Fates. A great lofty chamber with a wide latticed window runs entirely across the rear of the stage. The Fates are dressed in long flowing gowns, one scarlet, one*

gray, one black. They are spinning. Suddenly one of them rises and goes to the window. She flings it open, disclosing the world! The two hemispheres are shown in all their majesty. The faint flush of the dawn is breaking over the Chinese Wall, a silver moon smiles down upon the gay life of New York. In one corner the Aurora Borealis is borealising for all it's worth. When the audience stops applauding the Fate says, "Margaret has been fired!!!"]

[Curtain.]

ACT THREE

This act is pure symbolism. It portrays the forest of Margaret's bewilderment. Her job lost, her mind goes wandering, wandering about.

[*Note. This scene costs only six dollars and seventy cents. It is made of old rags sewed together and draped in folds. No paint was used. Mr. Vague said he would use no paint, that in a symbolic scene paint would be out of place. So he took those liquids which were symbolic of Margaret's thought and used them. Over some places he poured coffee, over others tea, over others tomato soup. The result justified his courage.*]

MARGARET [*entering near the coffee folds*]. I am fired, I am fired!!!

[Curtain.]

ACT FOUR

[*Again the kitchen. Margaret is sitting in dejection. On her lap is a Nile green salad, clashing horribly*

with the green of her dress, thus showing conflicting emotions. The door opens and Wiff enters. This time he is wearing a warm blue that blends beautifully with the rest of the scene.]

MR. WIFF. Margaret, we have just learned that the oysters were not blue-points. You are hired again.

[Margaret throws the horrible salad out of the window and picks up a huge dish with a tan pudding on it. Harmony restored, the—

Curtain Falls.]

THE ÆSTHETICS OF THE OUTDOOR PLAY



HERE is no more enchanting experience in the world than to be in an idyllic outdoor play. To translate oneself into an imaginary personage, removed in the first place from all drab realities; and next, to move and speak as this being, in the midst of actual natural beauties of scene, makes one feel that the fancied things are, for that charmed interval, the real, and that all duller ones are negligible, and shall never again be anything else.

The art of setting an outdoor play, is first of all to dispense absolutely with all apparatus which suggests the artificial properties of the indoors theater.

As nearly as possible it is advisable to choose or prepare a spot which may be adapted in its spacing, levels, and stationary objects, to the needs of a variety of productions. To what nature provides of background groves, hill slope, rock piles, water sheen and boundary, one should add artificially only such things as in a garden, to support or embellish the natural effects. To introduce papier maché rockeries trailed over with factory-made leaves, into the midst of natural shrubbery and among the true colors and substance of earth and stone and tree, is an insult to the eyes, as well as to nature. Stage wings, cordage and other obvious machinery undo all the distinctiveness of an outdoor play,—all its reason for being,—except indeed the advantage in certain seasons of seating an audience in the open air,—an advantage, to be sure, but not in the matter of

æsthetics. Thus trussed up in machinery it becomes a mere transference of the indoor scenic paraphernalia to a place where it is a most patent and peculiarly hideous type of disillusionment.

For the artist in outdoor play production will most of all take advantage of the natural setting, rather than discount it; and not only of its stationary objects for the purpose of his action, but of its coloring, its lights, its shadows as they pass during the time of performance, even, and as well, sounds that occur in the spot,—sounds of water, insects, birds.

But, related to such natural effects as these, we have never yet in our outdoor play art as we have it presented, exhausted experiment in certain exquisite artificial effects which may consistently be used for embellishment. For instance: the use of natural musical notes, related to the music scheme we compose or choose. First,—it does not seem always realized that out of doors delicate musical effects are far more enchanting than heavy ones, not only delicate ones, but broken ones. This lack of realization arises from conceiving of what are in fact but *parts* of a dramatic composition, as if they were to constitute the complete composition. But musical work to be presented by instruments alone or voices alone, is quite a different matter from music which is to be reinforced by scenery and drama. As soon as the latter is to occur, music is but contributory to a composition of which lights, color, movements of groups and individuals, speech and varieties of other sounds, besides vocal or instrumental melodies, are together to sum up the impression to be conveyed by the production. It is doubtless because we disregard this that the conventional opera seems often a hybrid.

For it sometimes seems that the composer of the music believes his share to be alpha and omega in

opera as we have it, and forgets the place of color, action, and their myriad nuances. Let a musician, if he will, write a great composition that is to stand alone, but then let him present it so without the reinforcement of dramatic arts and realistic setting. The moment he plans to introduce these other elements into his vehicle of expression these elements of action, objects and color, he must respect them, give them the dignity they deserve as part of his full composition. To do this, he must no longer think only in music, but must permit the music to conjure definitely and clearly in his vision the scenes and action which it suggests and requires to illustrate it; the dramatic motive, which by turns bears it or tends to develop and elaborate its impulse. That is to say, music, action, and scene visions should perpetually act and react on each other. There is doubtless no composer who does not make mental visions as he writes his music, just as no poet could be unconscious of images, or of melodies or rhythms, while he made his stanzas. But if the composer plans a dramatic vehicle for his music, as in opera conventionally rendered,—then, just in proportion to its need of other elements than music to contribute to the total effect, must he define and relate his visualization of action and setting to his music, with a clear and careful technic that shall not permit any one element to unduly cloud the others: the proportioning, of course, to be in accord with the nature of his composition, whether it be grim, gay, swift, or slow.

This comment on possibilities of a perfected opera is not an inconsequent digression, but is made with intention, for it serves to illustrate the most marked opportunities for delightful and distinctive effects in the outdoor play. There are traditions concerning outdoor festivals of several types, but we are at

present quite scatteringly experimenting with them, and have as yet, happily, let us say, crystallized no hybrid from which it is necessary to break away. We can begin afresh from the beginning, if we will, and compose our whole plan for the outdoor drama with an untrammelled æsthetic seemliness, proportionably, let us hope, in respect of all its parts, and not regarding any one element as a nucleus revered as invariable in its importance as some composers, from tradition, hold music to be, in opera—a nucleus to which others may be permitted, timidly, to tack on dances, action, scenery and other embellishments. This form of drama, the outdoor play, coming among us so vigorously as it has done of late out of our growing realization of the need of open-air community recreation, permits us to handle it with independence of every cut-and-dried model—freedom from everything save only allegiance to the first principles of art in structure and development,—those principles from which no true æsthetic sensitiveness will ever permit divergence.

Primarily, the outdoor play is a deliciously unhampered form of drama, which is open to unconventional treatment, however firmly it may impose its own subtle laws upon the dramatist. But it gives him the best sort of opportunity to begin at first principles, with the purest elements of his art, and upon that to develop most charming, original schemes, all in ways the limitations of the indoor stage will not permit. Indeed, the student of drama may by this avenue seem himself to retrace the steps of drama from its beginnings in emotional ritual to its eventual conventionalized forms. And how badly needed by our dramatists, for the most part, are such graduated steps of experimental study in production!

An outdoor spot may itself inspire a poet to prepare his play; but it is more usual for him to imagine his scene and have to model and adapt available ground to it. A place reasonably adjustable in the probabilities to any idyllic out-of-door drama, as well as to the needs of seating an audience well, is the practical consideration.

Imagine, for example, we have a play that may be done at its best out-of-doors; romantic, perhaps fanciful, with some heroic or otherwise strong dramatic passages and personages, and having in its composition, about equally distributed, the æsthetic elements of dance and song, accompanying music, action, and rhythmical speech, proper to an outdoor performance.

First, in such case, then, consider your setting. Groves or wooded stretches lend mystery, naturally, in a background. Tall trees or short have respectively their definite dramatic aspects, and it is for the artist producer to sense how he will employ these in relation to his action in order to convey the impressions he desires. These distinctions being of no small importance, since it is exactly in such æsthetic refinements we are now usually made conscious that our producers are sadly lacking, either from carelessness, lack of innate sensitiveness to such things, or from neglect to discover principles upon which to develop their work.

If you wish effects of mystery and suspense, and have a flat, open lawn, instead of a grove, substitute distance, slow approach of groups and characters, or arrange what devices you may to help your landscape setting in its enhancement of the emotional effects of your play. But remember always the necessity of doing this as a landscape architect does, by means of strictly natural objects; real rocks,

water, or shrubbery, even though you must place them by labor, when they are not placed by nature.

The appearance of individuals, or groups, over the brow of a slope is a delightful dramatic surprise to be developed in the varied gradations of comedy or seriousness, as needed, through the manner of the act of appearance, and the subsequent manner of descent to the central action.

Shadows, and their passage, during hours of performance, should be utilized; certainly never overlooked in their relation to the movement of the play. Water sheen, in the same way, should be employed as enhancement,—never treated as negligible or accidental.

Personally, I should prefer never to put on a play out-of-doors at night, if its scenes were not night scenes, and then I would make the lighting have the effect of natural night lights; moonlight, soft twilight after sunset, or the intentionally artificial lighting of torches, bonfires, or such twinkling incandescent globes, or lanterns in trees, as would be used to light a bivouac, an ancient hosting, or a garden. But I should avoid setting a play at night out-of-doors if it required the reproduction of supposed daylight scenes. It is too sadly wasting entrancing opportunities and necessitating obviously exaggerated lighting. However, there must occur plays of beauty for out-of-doors rendering, in which day and night scenes might be unavoidably juxtaposed. But in connection with night scenes, out-of-doors, few artists have made the most of the wonderful possibilities of irregular lighting: the dramatic excitement of fire-flare and shadow,—of half-seen faces, and dimly descried movement. Mystery and illusion are half the spell of art!

Sometimes an available locality transcends our

own imagining of the setting for our composition. In such case it is a luxury to live up to it, and the only danger is, of elaborating our effects to fit unexpected opportunities so far that we may obscure the initial direction of our theme. For after all the *seed thought* in any composition is its first and greatest value, rather than its vehicle of setting. It is much more usual, though, for our locality to be found deficient, so that we must improve it to meet our idea, so far as possible, and then vary our modes of action and personal effects further in such ways as form substitute impressions, as distance of approach, when we have not screening.

As for color: sheer fabrics in clear colors are as beautiful as rainbows out of doors. Dull tones in sheer fabrics are in keeping with mists and shadows; but brilliant shades in opaque fabrics are very powerful and excitingly dramatic in the outdoor light, and the proportioning of them to the impression one desires to convey must therefore be carefully studied. Similarly, dull, sombre tones in opaque fabrics are dramatic, but in the direction of depression:—uncompromisingly heavy, tragic or grim. It is for the artist to make himself adept in the exact æsthetics of his color schemes out-of-doors, where the opportunities are richer but more exquisite and elusive than within doors, and at the same time more merciless to any æsthetic ineptitude. Our school pageantry done in the parks exemplifies such ineptitude, and it would seem that children, whose education in finer instincts is quite as important as their education in the price of potatoes, should not be at the mercy of a quite haphazard art culture on the part of school directors and park commissioners.

The sensitive actor is swiftly responsive to his environment. Space affects his use of his voice and

his action almost unconsciously. In proportion as he is an artist, however, he will understand and command his sensitiveness in this respect, and study to make his dramatic machinery of vocal and gestural power pliant, so that it shall respond completely and appropriately to every demand. Out-of-doors, instinctively one knows that space diffuses sounds, and that the voice to carry must be directed with more fullness and clearness of tone and with a more finished utterance of words,—with a more careful measure in the punctuation of phrases, than even a large indoor auditorium requires. Indeed, a usual, colloquially measured speech, out-of-doors, is at best ineffective, and sounds even careless. More often it is blown away altogether and lost—an inarticulate murmur. Outdoor plays almost demand lyrical, or at least markedly rhythmic, speech in conversational passages; and the most euphonious wording of songs so that vocalization of speech is at its simplest. Though outdoors one may not, however, readily command acoustics, one may experiment in a locality, and discover such acoustic advantages as are ready-made and,—but always within the rules for proper natural appearance,—sometimes set up aids for reflecting the voice. There is not always a rock wall behind your scene, and your scene as you wish it, may not admit of a house wall or high fence literally presented; but the latter might often be a permissible feature if sufficiently covered with living vines to be beautiful.

But with or without artificial or natural voice reflectors, special study of speech delivery is essential for out-of-doors performances. The untrained person attempts to be heard by being shrill, but beauty and impressiveness are necessary, and shrillness is only horrible. Proper repose of tone and the right

use of cadence in phrase, of perfection in delivering syllabic values, these the outdoor actor who is an artist, will regard. The writer of the play, for his part, must phrase his lines rhythmically and euphonically, keeping in mind that whatever the dramatic effect he wishes to convey, the open air medium invariably requires longer vocal sounds, if they are to carry well, than does indoors. That is, the actor must have supplied to him in the author's lines, sounds upon which he can linger somewhat more than is required indoors: he must have these supplied, if the author wishes his language conveyed in the most beautiful and telling manner.

So, it is also the poet's place to learn, by sensitive analysis of effects, how he shall balance his speech sounds to produce in an outdoor play where they must be uttered more lingeringly, a dramatic effect which could be produced by a quicker, sharper language utterance indoors. Such technic is no negligible matter in a poet's art. He knows, if he is completely an artist in his craft, that it is not alone his business to present a thought, but that he must do it with perfection—in beauty and appropriateness. If he chooses a certain mode for the delivery of his poetry, then to the special technic of that mode, be it dramatic or musical, he must be subject. Our Western stage is very young in its attainment of such finesse in effects. They badly need attention, and there is special opportunity for understanding them in the outdoor play in ways that will greatly aid the art of our indoor theaters. In our revolt at present against the stereotyped modes of the popular stage, some of our young groups of experimenters in a freer field are mistaking haphazard spontaneity for the art that, by analytical experiment alone, learns expertly to reproduce nature. These young experi-

menters have still to learn that to be sensitively temperamental without control of powers is but to be the raw material of an artist. To learn to command, for an artificial occasion, what you have noted as a spontaneous expression on some natural occasion the impression of which you wish to convey in a composition is true art. Exact laws of æsthetics and the psychology of art demand regard as stringently as the mathematical exactness demanded of the engineer. In fact the laws of art might be reduced to an exquisite species of mathematics which must be *sensed* out by the patiently tutored institutions of the artist much more subtly than is required for the engineer's estimate of objective quantities. The person ruled by temperamental impulse may be a medium,—he is by no means at first necessarily an artist. The man with a true message of his own,—the genius, as we say,—is he who, able to lose himself temporarily in listening to those spiritual messages for which we may all be mediums if we will,—learns also how to command his power of delivering them with an adequate dignity through a studied art or science or other life work, devotedly pursued.

One usually thinks of song and dance as the important feature of an outdoor play. This is natural from our traditions of both ritual and merrymaking, and outdoor plays without them would certainly miss elaborations of drama finding their happiest opportunity out-of-doors.

The choric group out-of-doors makes its appeal more by its decorative function than by its dramatic one. It is so peculiarly and notably decorative in the natural landscape, that we think of it as a support of the spectacle rather than of the thematic action. In reality, however, it is no more permissible outdoors than in, to disregard the interdependence of these

two elements, but latitude in decorative effects is the characteristic opportunity of the outdoor play: we are within our æsthetic rights in accenting them. We should be dexterous enough in our handling to make such accent serve to enhance our dramatic effects.

Close massed, extensive groups, with strong color schemes in opaque fabrics, are always magnificent. If the locality is simple in its boundary lines and objects, it is easy to make such heavy groups subordinate it too much and lose the delightful, airy values outdoor atmosphere and the coloring of natural objects may give. One must learn to properly balance these values of group color scheme and mass with landscape setting, in whatever ways are necessary to convey the particular dramatic or spectacular impression proper to the play presented.

Conversely, as the close massed, brilliant solid colors are heavy, or majestic, loosen the mass, and these same bright colors become light,—gay. Use dull, opaque color, and the close mass intensifies heaviness and grimness; the loose mass becomes motley, and takes a turn toward the grotesque, toward certain drab broken aspects of somber action, or sordid comedy and buffoonery. The fine shadings in these things depend on the persevering self-training of the artist, his constant sharpening of his sensitivities to the effects with which he must deal.

In this cursory touching on the possibilities of action in an outdoor play, with relation to color and modes of massing, I have wished to lead attention further to the reinforcement given all effects by the illumination of outdoors atmosphere, its mirror-like quality of reflection, which extends in a transparent nimbus the colors of every object.

For this reason, to employ more leisurely distances

between objects and groups, freer masses of actors and dancers than on the indoor stage, is the mode of taking the more artful advantage of the vivid atmospheric opportunities of outdoor setting.

Dancers, few in number, each extending his radius of motion and color, shadow and light, by means of filmy scarves, will be much more beautiful than a crowded mass of dancers. Crowding of colors, figures, and objects out-of-doors is simply like painting the lily; it is a vulgar lack of sensitiveness to the atmospheric reinforcement constantly supplied, and it kills the clear, natural effects in a confusion that is tiresome, because it is throwing on too much brightness to be assimilated and harmonized by the vision.

It is the same with music out-of-doors. Slight and exquisite sounds go farther and are more significant than within doors. A perpetual, lovely murmur lives in outdoor air, and we are conscious in it of living echoes in multiple, interknit reflections.

Indoors, a long pause in orchestral music must, or may be, filled by artful means of action, artificial scenic effects, or calculated sounds. Outdoors, silence itself is full of life. In the outdoors play no sensitive artist can outrage this opportunity. Just as with color and motion, where he must continually recollect the atmospheric mirror full of natural iridescence, the play of complex light and shadow masses, and the varied distances; so he must feel constantly the relation of his instrumental and vocal embellishments, to a constant supporting croon supplied by nature, and the endless reflective elasticity of the outdoors air. That is to say: if he can appreciate this delicious natural reënforcement—and he has no claim to the title of musician if he cannot—he will realize that the notes to be supplied by instru-

ments must not attempt to convey the whole harmony in the music setting of his composition. Instead, he must sense what the natural atmospheric murmur will supply, and how the untrammelled elasticity of the air will produce a peculiar subtle diffusion of his actual instrumental notes which will tend to undo the effect of instrumental harmonies, but to enhance melodies. That is the lesson he must learn first, relative to musical effects out-of-doors, if they are to be employed in their greatest refinement. This is not saying that instrumental harmonies cannot be beautiful out-of-doors, any more than to say it of massed color effects. But I am assured in saying that to be used to the best advantage they demand a different adjustment, a greater restraint in their complexity of effects, or, like color, used inordinately in the midst of landscape, they become vulgar, a demonstration of lack of sensitiveness to the support nature supplies to art. Before one intrudes instrumental harmonies upon the outdoor air in the same fullness and complexity possibly suitable indoors, one does well to study attentively simple melodic effects, especially those produced by one instrument, or one voice. Study these in relation to distances, and to exquisite cadences into silence.

At last, when you have regarded all these things, reproduce your entire composition: music, colors, lights, and shades, stationary setting, action, by eye and ear, and then balance your effects in their interdependence, and discover where impressions conveyed are confused, overlap, or are deficient. Simplify and clarify, until you make the advantages of outdoors proportionately part and parcel of your total fabric, rather than permit your composition or any part of it to be coarsely and unsensitively an excrescence and intrusion upon the largesse of nature.

To specify: say you find some action of groups or persons mars a lovely effect of color needlessly so far as dramatic motif is concerned. The action then should be modified to preserve the beautiful visual effect, and it may be that you will find this effect will contribute something more significant to the dramatic motif than any personal, physical action at that juncture would do. Each artist's sensitively æsthetic experiments in rehearsal are the sole means of discovering such measures as related to each special case. Again, a musical phrase that indoors might effectively support an action of speech, may, out-of-doors, be with more impressive effect, omitted; and some lovely outdoors sound, proper to the locality, be permitted to form its substitute, as the trickling of a spring, or soft waves dragging small pebbles down the sand. To imitate literally some out-of-door sound in such intervals is also often more effective than a technical musical translation of such sounds harmonically: as, for instance, it is thrilling and sweet, out-of-doors, to leave a lovely silence in the midst of your drama — a soft suspension of action — and to break it by one bird's note, vocally imitated, alluring and far away, as the signal stirring to dramatic action again. It is much more enchanting to hear voices distantly, or one stringed instrument sounding from a grove, than a great orchestral blare.

Yet all these things must modify each other according to the impression necessary to convey on any occasion. Clash and blare sometimes belong properly to a drama, out-of-doors as well as in. The skreel of the Gaelic pipes, for instance, belongs most of all, to natural setting, and there is nothing mild and gentle about them. Even a coarse, noisy effect, not alone barbarically harsh like the romantic Highlanders' pipes, may belong to an outdoors play once

in a while; for not all plays or action are to be borne on a continuous stream of lyrical milk and honey. But it is necessary for a dramatist to be sure always that every effect, vulgar or exquisite, be obtained by premeditated art in his productions, and not produced accidentally through ignorance or lack of sensitiveness to æsthetic shadings.

Yet no rigidly circumscribed scheme for this dramatic vehicle of expression any more than for any other should be made;—a no easy pigeonholing of rules and cases is possible. With fundamental laws as inexorable in art as in anything else, the variations developed upon them seem inexhaustible, so that each artist must be on a perpetual journey of discovery, his only law in this being that he must be able to test the truth of his discoveries in variations and their multiple combinations by tracing them to an origin in a fundamental æsthetic.

All of which seems very exacting. But the perfect drama is very exacting of the artist. Few who rush in upon it can measure their attainment to its proper needs. Some paragraphs back you will see the dramatist was called upon to reproduce mentally the total effects of his composition, music, color and action. This is as if he were expected to be musician, colorist, stage director, as well as writer of the spoken lines and lyrics. It might not be your business nor mine, to exact this of him; but it is true that a perfected dramatic art would so exact it, since drama must reproduce living effects in all their ranges, in proportion as specific motives demand. And as a matter of fact, true faculty for the arts means an æsthetic sensitiveness and responsiveness to their several manners of expression. There could not be a poet in words, who had no exquisite sensitiveness to sound values, or fine power of inner visualization of images, or sense

of rhythmic movement in physical action. When the poet dramatizes he will find need to emphasize and bring into more active service these capacities which, more or less, must always subconsciously reënforce his verse writing, that language technic in which he specializes. To the extent that he emphasizes the service to him of these other arts, by studying their technical handling in addition to his literary technic, to that extent he will have his dramas more completely in his control in their theatrical production, and be independent of the collaboration of painter, musician and stage technician so far as originating his designs, plots and schemes goes. For however he might be able to execute the full work, it would be beyond the physical endurance of most persons to actually do it.

Yet certainly it is only by such education of himself as this, in the understanding and mastery of technical principles of the several arts that go to make up his central art, that a dramatist can become accurately sensitive to divergences from the impressions he wishes conveyed by his production, when such divergences occur in the work of his aides, and know how to help them technically to right them and to keep them in sympathy with his central motive. At all events only by such mastery and understanding may he maintain his place as the dominant figure in the production of his composition; and so much every dramatist and poet worthy of the name owes to his art when he essays to prepare compositions with the object of definite spectacular production.

Finally, because of its opportunity for a multitude of subtleties differing from those natural to the indoor stage, the outdoor play, for the dramatist who will analyze and experiment attentively, is an avenue by which to study at their clearest and simplest such

necessary relation of his several orders of effects, as will make him able to handle his composite art himself independently and adequately as to its complete initial projection, or at least with decreasing need of collaboration in this respect and in the supervision of its production. And differing from the indoor production as it does in many of its special exactions, we can see in what ways it may contribute to the indoor theater, in suggestions for a wealth of yet untried effects, scenically, dramatically, and musically.

Indeed, when we have seen more of the outdoor play, much that is given to us now in our theaters will begin to seem turgid and bizarre. We shall begin to formulate a new ideal for theatrical setting, based on the superior aesthetic purity of the outdoor play: its special scope for a brilliant clarity in dramatic vigor, for limpidity and suavity in lyrical passages. We may learn better from it, the ethereal secrets of color; of atmospheric values; more gracious spacing; and the elimination of obvious artificialities. And we shall become aware how more enthralling than the most voluptuous harmony in support of a given dramatic passage may be one melodic phrase, launched from silence to return into it again; or, reproduced only by the most delicate instrumentation, what exquisite, lingering value there is in the trailing note of a bird, or the *susurrus* of cicadae.

ANNE THROOP CRAIG.

THE GREEK THEATRE AND ITS DRAMA*

By Roy Flickinger: A Review



IN HIS preface Dr. Flickinger states his aim as threefold: first, to elaborate the theory that the peculiarities and conventions of the Greek drama are largely explicable by its environment, in the broadest sense of that term; secondly, to emphasize the technical aspect of ancient drama; and thirdly, to elucidate and freshen ancient practice by modern and medieval parallels. He also intends his book to reach two very diverse types of readers,—a general reading public which has little or no acquaintance with the Greek and Latin classics in the original, but has a deep and abiding interest in the drama, and those classicists who desire to know the results of the latest investigations.

In striving for his ends, Dr. Flickinger is seriously handicapped by the composite nature of his chosen audience. A large part of his heaviest source-material is presented in his introduction, in which, as in his last chapter, he addresses himself entirely to his classicist readers; but the body of the book is rendered clumsy and uneven by the too frequent incorporation of the evidence (which a classicist, of course, desires to weigh) in the text which the general reader is following. The proof afforded by Greek vase-designs of the elaborate nature of a Dionysiac procession belongs in a footnote, as does the discussion of the probable number of actors in the dithyrambic chorus. The general student of

* University of Chicago Press.

dramatic development desires to have those facts accessible, but he desires still more to know how far, for instance, the chorus-convention helped or hindered classical tragedy, and in what modified and attenuated form its usefulness persisted. The first two of these desires are gratified by Dr. Flickinger's book, but hardly the last.

The most serious lack of the volume is, in fact, for those general students of dramatic development whom Dr. Flickinger hopes to reach. When in Chapter III the "more or less improbably motivated pause" in Greek tragedy, to enable an actor to change costume, is discussed, reference might have been made to that pause at the close of *As You Like It* after Rosalind, previously disguised as the youth Ganymede, has left the stage to don woman's apparel. This pause is filled by Touchstone's discourse on the seven degrees of a quarrel, and when we remember that an earlier, but differently motivated, pause in the same play, when Orlando leaves the woodland banquet to fetch Adam, was filled by Jaques' lyric musing "All the world's a stage,"—when we remember also that these two figures carry, for Shakespeare's play, that function of philosophic comment which was one of the functions of the Greek chorus, we surely have in this kind of material, as in Augier and Pinero, the possibility of a discussion such as Dr. Flickinger's preface had led us to anticipate. When, again, the Greek mode of introducing and identifying characters is commented upon, there is the obvious parallel in Shakespeare's practice; and there are cases in Shakespeare, not to mention modern playwrights, of a dexterity in accomplishing this unobtrusively which perhaps cannot be paralleled in Greek plays, but should at least be discussed. For instance, in the second part of *King Henry IV*,

at the opening of the third act, King Henry enters, accompanied by a page, whom he bids call the Earls of Surrey and of Warwick. The page departs on his errand, and in the brief "wait" the King utters the famous and beautiful soliloquy on sleep,—it being then deep night and he unable to rest. The two personages, previously not upon the stage, who appear as he concludes are, of course, easily recognized by the audience as Surrey and Warwick. The Greek treatment, and the medieval and modern treatment of such a tactical point, with the compelling reasons for both practices, merit a more detailed comparison than is given them by Dr. Flickinger. Again, in Chapter VI the sudden shift from Delphi to Athens in the *Eumenides*, by the childish device of the principal actor's running out and then at once running in again with the announcement that he has arrived, is mentioned as a case of the occasional strain put upon the imagination of the Athenian audience, and here parallel examples from medieval religious drama might be cited in numbers. For a somewhat similar example of naïveté, take the fourteenth play of the York cycle of the English religious drama. Joseph and Mary are at Bethlehem, and Joseph goes out of the cattle-shed to seek a light. Mary, left alone, says:—

Now in my soul great joy have I;
 I am all clad in comfort clear.
 Now will be born of my body
 Both God and man together infeer.
 Blest may he be!
 Jesus, my son that is so dear,
 Now born is he!

For the classicist this book may well contain much;

and the English student seeking information on Greek stage tactics can also derive liberal help from it. But that elucidation of ancient practice by modern and medieval parallels which was promised in the preface has but scanty fulfilment.

ELEANOR PRESCOTT HAMMOND.



GRANVILLE BARKER AS DRAMATIST



R. GRANVILLE BARKER has not particularly figured in this country as a playwright—although that is not to say his plays have not been here and there read—and it is in any event almost a decade since his last original effort. The *Three Short Plays*, published in the autumn, appear almost startlingly slight after such a gap; one is a little at a loss, in spite of their amusingness, to know why Mr. Barker took up his playwright's pen again at all if to a purpose of no greater proportions than *Rococo*, *Vote by Ballot*, and *Farewell to the Theatre*. A farcical anecdote of middle class vicarage life that reaches both its climax and denouement in the shattering of a rococo vase; a final confession of Tory faith to the Liberal whose seat in Parliament one has been instrumental in securing for thirty years; half an hour's reminiscence on the part of an actress about to leave the stage—extremely pleasant chips as these three sketches are, they seem very small performances, indeed, for which, as it were, to open up a theatre that has been dark for so long a time.

But if the *Three Short Plays* add nothing to the importance of Mr. Barker's reputation, they are entirely characteristic, not only in the turn of their phrasing and general manipulation of detail, but in the choice and treatment of material. Not that Mr. Barker's early pronouncement that a play is "anything which can be made effective upon the stage of a theatre by human agency" is a sufficiently catholic

banner for a playwright to follow in many fields, but that, for all the liberty he holds out, he has a certain clearly marked and individual method of dramatic approach. Although Mr. Barker is closely related to the school of social critics, and although the "theme," or "problem" is frequently emphasized in his plays, such a formulation is no more his starting point than is the Aristotelian "fable." It is the mood or atmosphere of a society that emerges most clearly from the Barker plays. The plot is illustrative, rather than essential, and the main figures are chosen as supremely characteristic or as informingly in contrast.

This preoccupation with a corporate character rather than with an individual already shows itself in *The Marrying of Ann Leete*, Mr. Barker's first published play. The plot has been called "anecdotal." What one gets from the play is a sense of eighteenth century England,—of a society that has no use for anything but "polite" conversation, that is often too epigrammatic to be intelligible and much too refined ever to be sincere. A fresh mind that has matured not too close to this delicacy revolts from it. The fresh mind happens to be a young girl, and she marries her father's gardener,—a slender plot to sustain four long acts. What keeps the course of the play smooth is the atmosphere of the sultry garden at Markswayde where the fountain nymph is broken, where Ann is kissed on a wager, and her sister, Lady Cottesham, learns that her husband and her lover have met and chatted about her,—and the suggestion we get from these incidents and properties of a period in which they are at home. Ann protests her naïveté too consciously for naturalness; she is, on the whole, entirely aware that she exists to throw into relief the world her father represents.

Perhaps it is an offshoot of the cynicism of her elders that makes her put it to Abud.

ANN. Papa . . . I said . . . we've all been in too great a hurry getting civilized. False dawn. I mean to go back.

ABUD. He laughed.

ANN. . . . When my father dies what will he take with him? . . . Much wit. Sally is afraid to die.

But whether we find Ann in her eugenic marriage credible or not, the atmosphere against which she revolted has been subtly and effectively presented. The kiss Lord John Carp gave Ann to win a wager made during their night at cards; Carnaby Leet's duel in pretense of avenging his daughter's compromised honor and Lord John's resultant proposal to Ann; and Sarah's interview with her husband's lawyer lead into that remarkable scene in the garden after "such a long day now ending."

ANN. I mean to disobey you . . . to stay here . . . never to be unhappy.

CARNABY. So pleased!

ANN. I want to be an ordinary woman . . . not clever . . . not fortunate.

CARNABY. I can't hear.

ANN. Not clever. I don't believe in you, papa.

CARNABY. I exist . . . I'm very sorry.

Big drops . . . big drops!

ANN. John Abud . . . you mean to marry. When you marry . . . will you marry me?

[*A blank silence into which breaks Carnaby's sick voice.*]

CARNABY. Take me indoors. I heard you ask the gardener to marry you.

ANN. I asked him.

CARNABY. I heard you say you asked him. Take me in . . . but not out of the rain.

Here is the social charm, overripened, just turning to decay, that Watteau often painted.

In *The Voysey Inheritance*, Mr. Barker's next and least interesting play, we do not have to rest upon the dramatist's implication that the subjects of his study of the attitude of a bourgeois family towards successful dishonesty are typical of their class and period. We have had a biggish community of the contemporary English middle class presented in our theatres at one time or another lately, and we have grown inured to intellectual and moral dullness. And Mr. Barker's choice of commercial dishonesty as a touchstone makes the result too obvious. Mr. Galsworthy's best novel, *The Man of Property*, has treated a more dramatic variation of the theme.

It is only in *Waste* that there is a closely knit, intense plot, and it must at once be remarked that this is the most emotionally effective of Mr. Barker's plays. Here the group character is defined through its attitude towards the conflict of an individual. Trebell, although of the *raisonneur* stuff that all Mr. Barker's heroes are made from, and of the same colorless conception, is so representative of his society, his ruin comes so obviously through his being only the shade more consistent and logical, because he is in fact too perfectly its specimen that he does indeed seem to focus the strength and weakness of his period upon his own soul.

It is a consciously analytic and articulate society to which Trebell belongs. The women take their politics wittily if seriously, and well varied with Bach. Henry Trebell treats himself as if he were all brains; he says that he has sharpened himself to his political purpose as though he were a weapon,

but just for a half hour, a half hour of idleness and a "charming" woman, he finds himself in the grip of a natural impulse. Its consequences he accepts philosophically; that he never loved the woman, that another woman would have done as well, he considers insignificant. What is important is the conception of the child. This he tells frankly to the woman,—a "pretty thing" who left her husband rather than bear him children. She goes to a quack, dies as the result, and Trebell is not named in the Cabinet that was to have passed his Disestablishment Bill. He hates the worthless woman to whom he has given this power to destroy him, and in the end the reason that he takes his own life is that his creativeness has been killed with his child, and he feels himself spiritually dead.

This reasoning is too complex, too much argued out, to be dramatically effective. But the temper of the society of which he is representative has been powerfully dramatized,—a people who have tried to deal with everything with their minds, to neutralize their emotions by recognizing them and checking them with intellect. They have talked and moved about the stage with such complete naturalness that Trebell's and Amy's fate stand out blackly in contrast. Scandal and "grandes passions" they are used to but to taking them emotionally they are not.

In *The Madras House*, which the author has chosen to represent his work in Mr. Dickinson's volume, *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, there is not even the pretense at a plot. Nothing takes place from act to act except conversation. There are themes enough, certainly,—enough for a season's output,—but they are only so many expressions from various angles of a sex-ridden society, and if Mr. Barker believed in

one thesis more than another, his conviction is not so clear as is the state of things he has satirized. A household of six unmarried daughters; a drapery establishment where the employees "live in"; Constantine's retirement to the East to keep a harem so that his mind need not be distracted during hours of serious business,—all contribute to a fantastic picture of contemporary life from the point of view of sex.

The *Three Short Plays* are social vignettes. *Rococo*, almost Shavian farce as it is and moreover equipped with comic devices that have been equally at home in many periods (I, for one, regret Mr. Uglow's wig) is again a cross section of the Voysey world. Mrs. Underwood is heard to breathe, "Oh, . . . Thank goodness," when the rococo vase, the prize of the contention, is shattered, but, aside from the fact that the play must stop somewhere, it was a very short-sighted relief. The vase might be gone but the "principle" remained, and so, I am sure, did the discussion. Eventually, probably, the neighbors got drawn into a congenial dispute. The rococo vase was a legacy. "A legacy!" the author says in his atmospheric stage directions. "What English family has not at some time shattered its mutual regard upon this iron rock!" And the claimants for the rococo vase are hardly more than members of an "English family."

Vote by Ballot is not farce but comedy. In describing the setting the author says, "It is not quite a typical house for the Torpenhouses are not exactly typical people." Or, as Lord Silverwell puts it when his lifetime friend,—his man of business and the chairman of his committee,—says that he has for all these years been voting against his chief, "Torpenhouse, this is very serious. I've always known there

was a kink in you. You've had strange tastes . . . in books and things like that. But I never thought it was a moral kink." Torpenhouse, then, to whom his Tory faith "meant something" is the contrasting figure that suggests a social background. And, after all, however much Lord Silverwell may have been worked up for the day, Torpenhouse is an indispensable man of business, and "Whether, my dear fellow, it is worth while our doing anything but forget all the nonsense we've been talking, I . . . I . . . will consider tomorrow. You're an unaccountable chap, you know. You always were, confound you." And in the quite charming end, Mrs. Torpenhouse says, "Yes . . . sleep's what you need . . . I do think."

"So Torpenhouse goes to his room to lie down. And he may take that journey to Spain, and in the years that are left him, he may do lots of other things. Why not indeed?"

As for *Farewell to the Theatre* it is an actress's reminiscences of her "Dear Public," and the lawyer and old-time friend to whom she makes them belongs to the public, too, although he understands a shade more because he happens to have loved her.

For all Mr. Barker's adventure into the eighteenth century, and his exploitation of the realm of phantasy as in *Prunella*, it is always the same mood that he presents, it is always a weary, overcomplicated society where action is the outcome, not of faith, nor even of impulse, but of habit. It was no academic interest in reviving Greek drama that led Mr. Barker to produce the *Trojan Women*, but his kinship with Euripides. In the English dramatist's production the effect which emerged from that splendid pageant of tragic pictures, of mournful music and motion was of the internal decay, the sated luxury of the Trojan

state—of whose destruction the Greeks were only an instrument. These victims of a weary civilization, as they mourn their own overthrow, warn the newer nation not to exult, “yourselves so soon to die.”

Mr. Barker found another overripened civilization in the Vienna of Schnitzler, and the wit of his paraphrases of the Anatol dialogues sets forth in a brilliant light the spiritual death of a society from which zest and freshness have gone out as they have from Anatol's loves.

There are decadences and decadences, and Mr. Barker has discriminated among them. Social decadence (*The Marrying of Ann Leete*), the decadence of commercial rectitude (*The Voysey Inheritance*), emotional decadence (*Waste*), decadence in the relation of the sexes (*The Madras House*), sentimental decadence (*Prunella*), national decadence (*Trojan Women*), moral decadence (*Anatol*), the decadence of form, one might call the failure of suitability in *Rococo*, political decadence (*Vote by Ballot*), æsthetic decadence (*Farewell to the Theatre*),—a study in decadence one might call the series. Naturally in a period preoccupied with questions of social reform such a comprehension of decadence could not escape a definite thesis or two, but Mr. Barker is not at his happiest in his blasts against specific wrongs. Ann's sociologic motive and the final discussion of the “barnyard world of sex” in *The Madras House* are jarring elements in the effects of their respective plays, just as the individuals who try to stand out from Mr. Barker's canvases wear an unnatural air. In other words, the dramatist's central emphasis necessitates a particular technique.

Characters are stage accessories just as much as the back drop, and it is when Mr. Barker treats them

as such that his method is happiest. Such a bit of detail work as Mrs. Voysey is worth any multiple of Alice. She has always suspected the basis on which her husband's business was conducted, but she never discussed it with him. She sits deaf and placid through the family's argument over Hugh's intended separation from his wife and then shuts up the *Nineteenth Century* and removes her spectacles. "That's a very interesting article," she says. "The Chinese Empire must be in a shocking state. Is it ten o'clock yet?" Sarah, one of the dramatist's incidental intellectual women, has a truth that the more ambitious presentation of Ann entirely lacks. The humor as well as cynicism of Sarah's self-appraisal when she agrees to accept her husband's offer of Pater house, milk, butter, and eggs from the home farm and coals from the mine adjoining makes her decision to vanish from the world because she has nothing more to sell, simple and inevitable. Then there is Miss Yates in *The Madras House*, who from her lack of taste in the beginning for the rôle of a ruined woman pretends to be proud of the illegitimate child she is to bear, and in the end, finds herself actually so proud that she denies the father any right whatever. She is a far more convincing person than Fanny of the better known *Hindle Wakes*. Mr. Huxtable, a successful shopkeeper in the same play, is a comic conception of real pathos, for, however accidental the illness that gave him time to wonder, he is absolutely sincere and vaguely troubled when he asks, unoriginally enough, "D'you think it's only not being very clever that keeps us well-behaved?"

These happily caught figures have been painted in against their proper backgrounds. The passion for the suggestive, the atmospheric, detail, that has made natural Mr. Barker's assumption of the rôle of the-

atrical producer shows itself throughout the series of pictures that even his printed pages paint. Tatton, who has brought a lighted double candlestick from the table into Ann's garden before dawn, and seated himself in the darkness on the edge of the old fountain with his coat tails in a puddle of water; Abud's cottage,—the description of which has the charm of a Dutch interior—where Abud lights Ann up the steep stairs to bed;—such pictures are the best of Mr. Barker. The Crystal Palace whose apparent nearness means rain becomes the outward sign of the whole intellectual and conversational poverty of the Huxtables. Mr. Voysey's shining office where he brings a bunch of roses each day; Edward Trebell's working room with its white walls and windows "bare of all but the necessary curtains" and those few drawn back to let in the moonlight as he sits there that last night "to think"; the Rotunda of the Madras House;—the progress of the plays is always a pageant. Every group of persons is carefully composed, type balanced against type to give a group impression. Mrs. Farrant at her piano; Lucy Davenport with her book of German philosophy open on her knee; Mrs. O'Connel lounging on the sofa; Lady Davenport in a low armchair;—it is the ancient trick of the Flemish painter to represent each saint with his symbol.

At its best, notably in *Waste*, this method, where the figures of large canvases are interpreted and animated by conversation and action, remarkably gives us the atmosphere, or soul, of a time. That the static quality of such a presentation, since the representative or opposing figures in the end either merge or destroy themselves and leave the scene, shows the lack of a strong rush of dramatic conception, it cannot be denied. But Mr. Barker was not born an

Elizabethan; he belongs to his own age, which is speculative and critical rather than urged to any creative action by the need of some great faith or heat in the blood. Perhaps it is as a document of antebellum society that Mr. Barker will figure, but his sincerity and his taste mark him as an honest workman, whose method is considered and whose observation is penetrating. In this day of theatrical exaggeration and conventional conformation to pattern, one can only wish that the *Three Short Plays* may be forerunners to, at least, three long plays.

MARGARET HASKELL.

PROBLEMS OF THE ACTOR

By

LOUIS CALVERT *

A Review



FTER more than forty years of service as an actor, director and producer, Louis Calvert is in a position to speak ex cathedra of the art of acting and the problems and pitfalls of the artist. This first book of his is one of the best, probably the best work on the subject that has been written.

There have been pleasing volumes of reminiscences, for example, Miss Ellen Terry's delightful autobiography and Paul Wilstach's authoritative life of Richard Mansfield, and there have been volumes of misrepresentation, such as *The Truth About the Theater* and *The Life of an Actress*, both of which were published anonymously for obvious reasons—the one is not the truth about the theater, and the other is not the life-story of a successful actress. Books of this class have found a ready market among the uninitiate, as apparently was their purpose; but they have tended to reflect seriously on one of the foremost of the arts.

Mr. Calvert's book is written simply, with no attempt at style. Here and there he tells of personal recollections and experiences, but never obtrusively. One has the feeling as he reads that he is listening to

* Henry Holt and Company, New York.

interesting narrative and at the same time getting sound advice.

The really great value of *Problems of the Actor* is as a text-book for the aspiring young artist. Mr. Calvert says in the prologue: "I have tried to make clear what seems to me to be the primaries from which we should never depart."

His advice to the young person who is, as the saying goes, "stage-struck" is sound and informing. He does not, as has been the custom of many persons of the profession, say "Shun the stage—stay where you are." He advises, rather, that if you have for the art of the theater first of all the enthusiasm necessary to carry you through the trials and tribulations inevitable to the beginner in any art, and through the subsequent difficulties which beset the actor who has mastered beginnings but must at all times be the student, you should "go to it." The second necessary qualification, says Mr. Calvert, is "humanity." After these come imagination, voice, and personal appearance.

The relative value of stock and repertory, and the danger of becoming a one-part actor are discussed authoritatively. Chapters on the use and abuse of the voice, the effective use of the eyes and the hands, and the "art of doing nothing" are of inestimable value to the sincere student. In fact, a careful study of these three chapters would prove of greater worth to such a student than many a course in the average school of acting. Mr. Calvert takes up the effect on the actor of music, lighting and scenery, and the effect they have in turn, when properly correlated, on the audience.

In no sense is the book a preachment. Mr. Calvert knows his subject and tells you what his many years of experience have taught him. "Acting in its true

sense," he says, "is as boundless in its scope, as unfettered, as 'creative' as any of the other arts. . . . I sincerely hope that this little book has shown that the art of the actor calls into play the same imaginative and creative faculties as the art of the painter or the composer or the poet or the sculptor, and that the beginner in the profession should guide and judge his work by ideals as exacting and lofty as theirs."

Persons who like their accounts of the life of the theater colored with pictures of bepainted ladies of easy virtue who drink champagne for breakfast, and of opulent managers who sit in luxurious offices with one object in life—that of luring fair and innocent girls, should avoid Mr. Calvert's book. It tells the truth. Consequently, it will be read with appreciation by the vast army of workers in the world of the theater which has often been maligned; it will be interesting reading for the layman who seeks information; and, as has been said, its value as a textbook for the amateur actor or the young professional is of superlative degree.

VANDERVOORT SLOAN.

most

THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review Devoted to the Play and
the Theatre

August, 1918

THE DRAMA

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

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THE DRAMA

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THE LADY WITH THE MIRROR*

An Allegory
BY RITA WELLMAN

CHARACTERS

THE LADY WITH THE MIRROR (a goddess)

NITO (her maid)

THE GREAT POET

A YOUTH

[In a beautiful southern country one sees the LADY'S temple. A great Doric column rises from the center. Its upper part is not seen. Behind the column are black curtains. Arched doorways are on each side of the column. Beyond the doorways is a beautiful garden. A small writing box of ebony is at the left and at the right a couch of bronze with velvet cushions. THE LADY lies on the couch. She wears a Greek tunic with a long purple veil from her head. At her girdle is hung a large bronze mirror with a polished face. The servant is dressed in a tunic and wears an animal skin about her. THE LADY is looking into the mirror.]

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NITO. My lady is the most beautiful in all the land.

LADY. Who told you that, Nito?

NITO. You did, my lady.

LADY. And you believe it, then?

NITO. I believe everything my lady says.

LADY. Obedience! You are like all the rest of your kind, Nito. You see what is beautiful only when you are told. And I thought you were a real artist. But there . . . you are one. You are young. All the young are artists.

NITO [*meekly*]. Yes, my lady.

LADY. But have you no ambitions, child? When you are alone with your own little thoughts . . . ah, surely some little sneak comes stealing to you and makes your ears burn with pleasant ideas. You want to be a great dancer, to move and sway to sweet sounds. You want to see beautiful things and paint them with glorious pigments. A musician! A poet! Tell me, have you not been dreaming of such things?

NITO. Yes, Lady.

LADY. Which? Which will you be?

NITO [*dully*]. I do not know.

LADY. Obedience again. Well, I will guess no longer. Tell me, what is your ambition, child?

NITO. Your ladyship will be offended.

LADY. Offended? I? It is through ambitions I live, Nito.

NITO [*sadly*]. This is not an ambition, Lady; it is an ache.

LADY. Let me hear then. What is it of all things on earth you wish to have?

NITO. A husband.

LADY. A husband!

NITO. A tall straight man from my own people,—one with much hair on his face and arms. . . . Strong brown arms he must have, too. And he must

have many flocks, more sheep than any man in the land about. And our breasts will meet and our eyes and we will know each other and dare everything. Then I will know love and pain and happiness and will bring up strong beautiful children to tend the flocks.

LADY [*in disgust*]. That is no ambition.

NITO [*sighing*]. No,—it is an ache.

LADY [*rising*]. And this is the girl I have been caring for all this time. This is the girl I have taught the mirror lore. This is the girl who has looked deep into the shining surface of my mirror and seen the mysteries. Step by step, I was leading you onward in Beauty, until you could have chosen your place in any of the arts. And you tell me this . . . a husband with brown hairy arms!

NITO. I cannot help myself. I see him night and day. Why does he not come for me? I am seventeen. The light of my youth will go out if he does not come to build up the fires.

LADY. What a silly stupid little girl. Where could you have found such fancies?

NITO. In your mirror, Lady.

LADY. My mirror!

NITO. Yes, it was there that I first saw his face. [*She looks back.*] Someone is knocking outside, Lady.

LADY. Go and open.

NITO [*She goes and returns*]. It is The Great Poet, Lady.

LADY. The Great Poet!

[*She goes out to meet him.* NITO *spreads a rug and cushions on the floor.*]

POET [*entering*]. Lady . . .

[*He kisses her hand ceremoniously. He is tall and*

gaunt and looks as a poet is supposed to look. He wears a long flowing black cape.]

LADY [*petulantly*]. It has been a long time since you were here. I have been anxious about you. Where have you been and what have you been doing?

POET [*sinking to a cushion, and speaking languidly*]. You always ask me that same question in exactly the same tone. Any stranger present would know in half a minute the exact nature of our relations. It is most trying. You used to be more subtle, my dear.

LADY. You have been unfaithful again.

POET. I have, as a matter of fact.

LADY. Was she very young and beautiful?

POET. She was very young. I believe she was very beautiful. She must have been. I was faithful to her for six months.

LADY. More beautiful than I?

POET. Er—different.

LADY. Her love was more intense—more wonderful?

POET. Er—um—different.

LADY. Six months. [*She goes nearer.*] How long has it been since you wrote anything worth while?

POET. Worth while? About ten years ago when I first knew you.

LADY. I know. I mean since you wrote anything at all—anything you have not destroyed.

POET. Oh, about, let me see . . . five months . . . maybe six.

LADY. I thought so.

POET. You think I am so dependent upon you, don't you? That is what makes you so annoyingly trite, my dear. You feel so sure of me. You want me to be your little pet seal who flops around after

you in a lubberly devoted kind of way, but has no legs of his own to stand upon. I am a man if I am a poet. Besides, you have never troubled about being faithful yourself.

LADY [*loftily*]. I am above such things.

POET. There you are. I give my whole self, my time, my strength, my everything—whatever it is—paltry all of it. . . . And what have I? I was a young man when I met you first. I was full of vigor and hope. I could have taken the world then and broken it across my knee like a dry old stick. I laughed out loud at all your miserable little creeds of Beauty and Truth and . . .

LADY. Take care!

POET. Well, what are they? What do they amount to? We'll reason it out. What is the theme? Love! . . . Of course love. An ugly appetite exalted into Romance by cowards and dullards. Life . . . and Death. There you have the whole combination. And for these three old fakes a man must give up his whole life, ruin his eye-sight and his reason, trying to discover on their scarred, scrawled old surfaces something clean and new no one else has discovered before him. Bah! I could be better making shoes. There is some poetry in shoes. They hide the ugliest thing on earth—the human foot; that's something.

LADY. She has ruined you. Are other men following her too?

POET. Plenty of them. I saw a lot of your old lovers hanging around.

LADY. A new idea, a pretty face, youth . . . Yes, that is it—youth. That is the one thing I lack. I am very old.

POET. Yes, how old are you, by the way?

LADY. Old? Old as men's minds. I sometimes think I am even older than that. I must have had my

first stirrings long before the first man had his, so that when his brain was forming the thought of me crept in and helped to mould him. All that he has he owes to me, but he has never been grateful. He has neglected me and outraged me. He has sold me into slavery. But I have always been his friend and lover. I always shall be as long as I live.

POET. Here you are being solemn again. That's the whole trouble with you. You take things entirely too seriously . . . except serious things, which you completely ignore. A man wants a little gaiety, now and then. He wants to forget.

LADY [*going nearer to him and speaking softly*]. And I have never made you forget?

POET. Oh, at times.

LADY [*taking his head in her hands*]. Unruly boy. Think of the hours we have spent together.

POET. Those are the only things you women ever remember.

LADY. What mad hours they were!

POET. Yes, they were mad. And now you are an old woman and I am an old man and neither of us will ever be mad again.

LADY. That hussy has changed you. Tell me her name.

POET. Oh, she has many names. Every man calls her what he pleases. That is one of her charms.

LADY. Any of my names?

POET. Oh, yes, they call her your names, too.

LADY. Shame!

POET. Yes, men are quite shameless—especially artists. There's that pet prose writer of yours, the one with "the impeccable style." He has almost come to the point of marrying her. Oh, she's respectable enough.

LADY. Her name?

POET. I can't give away secrets. She is a near relative of your old enemy Success,—her daughter, in fact.

LADY. I might have guessed. So they are all running after Success, are they, and poor Art must sit here day by day with no one to worship her.

POET [*walking about restlessly*]. I know. It's a rotten shame. But what is to be done? You have taken all the manhood out of me. You have made me a contemptible weakling. I am fit for nothing but fruitless dreams. I doubt everything, including my own mind. Life to me is simply a succession of petty annoyances. I am incapable of feeling one decent, genuine emotion. I'm tired. I'm stale. I am disillusioned. I am all nerves and a bad taste. Truth, Beauty, Art . . . to Hell with you all! I want to be a cobbler.

LADY. I understand you now. I have lost you. This is the end.

POET. Yes, this is the end. From now on I will be known no longer as your slave and plaything. Down in a little shop I will be with a good leather apron on my knees hammering at an honest pair of boots. Then God forbid a thought to enter my head! I will smell twelve o'clock coming, and like a healthy, stupid animal I will go and fill my belly, and then in a pleasant stupor, with just enough energy to work, I will sit until evening, hammering and hammering. When it is dark I will fall into my bed, tired and dull, and sleep the whole night through with never an ecstasy. Oh, how sweet life will be then!

LADY. And you think you can so easily kill those shining things in there? [*She indicates his forehead.*]

POET [*sitting on the couch*]. They are no longer there, that is the pity of it. Before . . . years be-

fore . . . when I closed my eyes, the little thoughts came crowding to me like little angels. Oh, I was alive then! I would sit blissfully and allow them to sweep their silver wings over me, sit until I could stand it no more, and then in a passion I would fly to you and here together we would write—ah, how we would write! Oh, Lady, you have been my life. I am grateful. [*He kisses her hand.*] Now let me go off and die like the cur I am. [*He moves away.*]

LADY. You are unhappy, my poet.

POET. I have always been unhappy—only now I am unable to get any pleasure out of it.

LADY [*very softly and alluringly*]. Look, poet! It is growing dark. The dusk is coming. My garden—my garden has always given you peace. Memories blue and white are flying about it with their little fire lanterns. The mystery flowers are opening up their hearts to the night. And the stars are reflected in my deep pool—the pool of faith. Come, we will walk together there like lovers who have just met. I am old, dear poet, but I am always young. They have buried me, centuries back, but I have been unearthed, armless and scarred, . . . and they have fallen upon their knees and worshipped me. Am I not good enough for you?

POET. Too good. I have defiled you there in the city, and in the blackness of my failing heart. Let me go. I long to get rid of myself. [*He reaches the entrance.*] Henceforth I am no longer myself. I am an honorable cobbler.

LADY. Poet! Don't leave me. Who is there to worship me when you are gone?

POET. Don't forget—an honorable cobbler.

[*He goes out quickly.*]

LADY [*calling*]. Poet! Poet!

NITO [*entering*]. My poor Lady!

LADY. He has left me forever.

NITO. And my lover has never come. We are alone. [*She sings—rocking herself mournfully.*]

Like scattered blooms the birds have flown,

The yellow moon is sinking in the sky,

While I sit waiting all alone, . . .

Oh, come to me beloved, or I die!

LADY. Go and light the lamp outside. Perhaps another . . . [*Nito rises to go out, still singing.*]

And do not sing that mournful song— [*staying her*] although it is a curiously beautiful song. How can you sing such strange, beautiful thoughts when you do not think them? Who taught you such things?

NITO. My mother, Lady.

LADY. And who taught her?

NITO. Her mother.

LADY. And her mother before her?

NITO. That is so, Lady.

LADY. And this song—it has never been written upon pages?

NITO. No, Lady. It is given to girls when they are babies and is carried in their hearts until they are maids. And then one night it will break forth as you have heard now, and the lover should hear and come at once. He should come swiftly as the wind when the door is opened.

LADY. Some day a poet will write down that song and then it will belong to me.

NITO. That would be stealing, my Lady.

LADY. I have stolen before. All beautiful things must eventually be mine.

NITO. Yes, my Lady. Does my Lady wish me to-night?

LADY. No. Go. I wish to be alone.

NITO. I go to watch the moon—and pray.

LADY. And I, too, will pray.

[*She lights incense and places it before the Doric column. The smoke rises curling. THE LADY kneels. It has grown dark. THE YOUTH appears in the garden. He wears blue tights and a long blue cape. He is curious and expectant.*]

YOUTH [*entering at left*]. I saw a light and I heard singing. Who lives in this temple?

LADY [*rising*]. I do.

YOUTH [*taken aback*]. Oh! [*awed*]. Who are you? [*drawing closer*]. I never saw anyone so beautiful.

LADY. Not even Life herself?

YOUTH. Oh, I do not know Life very well. But you . . . I have known you always I am sure.

LADY. My prayer has been answered. Venus has answered my prayer.

YOUTH. And this place? [*He looks about in wonder.*] I have seen it all before. This is wonderful. And what is that hanging at your girdle?

LADY. My mirror.

YOUTH. Your mirror? What kind of mirror is it?

LADY. A magic mirror in which Life's dazzling face is reflected and made even more beautiful.

YOUTH [*impulsively*]. Oh, may I look into it?

LADY. Are you very courageous?

YOUTH. Oh, yes; I am afraid of nothing.

LADY. And faithful?

YOUTH [*hesitating*]. I . . . I think so.

LADY [*raising the mirror for him to look into it*]. Then look.

YOUTH. [*He looks once into the mirror and then draws away in agitation.*] Oh!

LADY. What did you see?

YOUTH. [*Holding the mirror, he speaks slowly.*] I see strange, terrible things, the shapes of all the things in the world, in a wonderful, awful pattern.

It is so simple—I can see it all quite plainly. And yet, as I look, it is changing, majestically changing. The shapes that were are shadows, and the shadows that were are shapes. There is color and odor in what I see and I can feel the heat and cold. And I can hear from all these moving things terrible music. [*He covers his face with his hands.*] Oh, I am afraid.

LADY. Now you know who I am.

YOUTH. Let me go. I am afraid.

LADY. There is no turning back now. You have looked into the mirror. [*Seductively.*] Come, sit here with me. [*She sits on the pillows.*] We will talk together, my new young friend!

YOUTH. You seem so kind and simple, yet I know my life is in danger from you. How beautiful you are!

LADY. Yes, tell me that. I must hear that very often.

YOUTH [*sitting beside her*]. May I love you then?

LADY. Yes, you must love me. Give me your hand.

YOUTH. Your touch! Is this sin?

LADY. No. There is no sin in me.

YOUTH. I know where I have seen you before. One night The Great Poet read a poem. I heard it. You were there.

LADY. Yes, I was there.

YOUTH. Since that time I have been dreaming unaccountable dreams.

LADY [*eagerly*]. You dreamed of becoming a poet like the great one?

YOUTH. Not so great, perhaps. But there have come thoughts to me . . . I had no way to explain how they came. They have troubled me so,—for my life is a sordid, contemptible life. From morning until night I am occupied in a hideous, vulgar trade.

LADY. What trade is that?

YOUTH [*rising—embarrassed*]. I am a cobbler, by trade.

LADY [*rising*]. A cobbler!

YOUTH. Now you will despise me.

LADY. No,—for you are no longer a cobbler. From now on you are to be the Great Poet of the Land . . . and the Great Poet will be the cobbler.

YOUTH. Lady!

LADY [*going to the column*]. Come. [*He obeys.*] Kneel. [*He obeys.*] Kneel at my altar to Venus. Say this after me: "I here dedicate my life to Beauty and to Truth."

YOUTH [*bowing his head*]. I here dedicate my life to Beauty and to Truth.

LADY [*reaching her hand to him*]. Rise.

YOUTH. But I may fail. It is so hard . . . the way of Beauty and Truth.

LADY. It is the only happiness. [*She draws the curtains from behind the column, revealing the garden filled with blue moonlight.*] Come, we will walk together in my garden of ecstasies. You shall see the memory flowers open their secret hearts to the night. You shall see the sublime stars mirrored in my pool of faith. Odors of beautiful forgotten things will meet your nostrils, and your thoughts will dance to old melodies that never die.

YOUTH. I love you!

LADY. Hours upon hours we will spend together in exquisite delight. With cheek upon cheek we will think dizzy thoughts. One by one the eternal secrets will become yours, and you will produce beautiful things for all men to rejoice in.

YOUTH. My most beautiful lady!

LADY. My poet!

[*Arms about one another, they go slowly into the garden. Outside Nitro can be heard singing her*

W

plaintive song. The scene becomes dark for a moment to indicate the passing of time. When it is light again it is bright with sunlight. THE YOUTH and the LADY walk in from the garden with their arms about each other. They are reading a scroll.]

LADY. It is the best you have written. It is worthy of us both.

YOUTH. It is like play to write now.

LADY. Yes, this is your best time. And you have worked hard.

YOUTH. I have worked like a madman. Sometimes I think I must be mad.

LADY. Don't think. Only feel—and write.

YOUTH. Yes, yes, you know best. You always know best. Kiss me. How young you are today. Your maid is a hag beside you.

LADY. Yes, I am always young—to the young. And you are really completely happy?

YOUTH. Yes . . . all but one thing.

LADY [*frowning*]. Ah! One thing. What is that?

YOUTH [*sitting at the ebony writing box*]. I have been thinking . . .

LADY. I told you to *feel*.

YOUTH. I have been thinking of all those others.

LADY. What others?

YOUTH. Oh, you know very well what I mean. Those other men—there must have been thousands of them. Last night I lay awake for hours. I saw them all in this place, in the garden there, at this very desk, possessing with you the same solemn hours that we have possessed together. And you were saying the same things to them that you say to me, looking the same, caressing them, thrilling them in exactly the same way. Why it is appalling when you think of it. . . . You have had more lovers than any woman who has ever lived. Every great man in his

tory has been yours, from Homer down to The Great Poet. And then I come, a silly, stupid cobbler boy, and you show me all the wonders you have shown those immortals.

LADY. You shall become an immortal yourself. What do you say to that?

YOUTH. [*Going to her, he speaks joyously.*] I an immortal! Is that destined to be? Oh, Lady, forgive me my boorish jealousy. [*He kneels.*] I swear always to serve you and be faithful.

[*There comes the faint sound of military music.*]

LADY [*apprehensively*]. What is that sound?

YOUTH [*raising his head*]. I have heard it before somewhere. It sounds strangely familiar.

[*They listen.*]

LADY [*in alarm*]. Dear youth, do not listen to that. It is one of those ugly things you must not hear.

[*She puts her hands over his ears.*]

YOUTH. Your hands are white and soft, my Lady, and their scent is sweet. All the memories of dear days rise within me at the scent of your hands.

[*He gently takes her hands, kisses them, and rises.*]

LADY. I beg of you not to listen.

YOUTH [*going toward the entrance*]. That music has a peculiar fascination for me. It frightens me—and yet I cannot help but listen.

LADY [*following him*]. Let us go into my garden—far into my garden. There, deep sunk in the flowers, this music cannot reach us.

YOUTH. I heard it years ago . . . before I was born.

LADY. Come with me. Hurry, hurry. You are ignorant and young. There is all the stupidity and ugliness in the world bellowing out in those sounds.

YOUTH. And yet . . . and yet . . . it is beautiful.

LADY. Youth, come. Come before it is too late.

[*The music has been growing louder and louder. There comes a clear call on the bugle.*]

YOUTH [*straightening in military attitude*]. I know. It is the call to arms.

LADY. [*With a cry, she throws herself upon him.*] Don't go. Don't leave me. Oh, thoughtless, mad boy, why would you leave me for that? Here I have taught you Goodness and Love. Think of our happiness . . . your work . . . Oh, my poet, my singer . . . immortal!

YOUTH. Yes, I was to be an immortal.

LADY. Oh, stay! I will hide you. I will keep you safe. In the rage and horror that is to come with this music I will keep you apart, flawless and innocent.

YOUTH. Yes, I must keep my faith. I must stay. We will hide together.

[*He holds her in his arms.*]

YOUTH [*drawing away*]. But listen. I hear now, below the music, like the slipping of swift water over stones, the shuffle of men's feet. Men, hundreds of men, men like me, my brothers, my father . . . slipping, slipping, like water rushing to the sea.

[*He straightens again in military attitude.*]

LADY. Stay! Stay!

YOUTH [*looking out*]. The music goes on. It never stops. It is calling me. It is calling me.

LADY. Look, then. Look in the mirror!

[*She flashes the mirror before his face.*]

YOUTH. [*He looks and then falls back aghast.*] Oh, no, it cannot be like that!

LADY. It is like that—worse than that. All the blackness my mirror can hold is not enough to picture what that music means. [*Passionately.*] Oh, men, I have given my life for thousands of years to

make you beautiful, and still you play that music and draw off my boys like rats to drown in blood!

YOUTH. I will come back. Quick. Your lips.

LADY. I cannot keep you!

YOUTH. I must go.

[He kisses her.]

LADY *[weeping]*. Stay. Stay . . .

YOUTH. Farewell.

LADY. Farewell.

[He runs out eagerly. The music is heard growing fainter. THE LADY stands looking out. It grows darker. The garden is illumined by sunset.]

NITO *[running in breathlessly]*. Lady! Lady! Terrible things have happened. The town is filled with soldiers. There are steel and guns and blood all around, and groaning and crying.

LADY. Blackness has come upon the land.

NITO. And the noise. Cannot you hear it from here? It is like the thunder, and when it comes, the earth quakes, and men die calling upon God and their mothers.

LADY. I know. I know. I have seen many wars.

NITO. I was on the hill here. I saw it all. The street where I used to live . . . and the blacksmiths . . . and the inn and the school house . . .

LADY. I know. I know.

NITO. And the cathedral! . . .

LADY. *[She becomes pale and starts forward.]*
The cathedral!

NITO. It is in flames!

LADY *[dully]*. In flames . . .

NITO. Oh, I am so afraid.

[She sits on the floor rocking herself back and forth.]

LADY. My cathedral! Two hundred years . . .
Oh, my boys, my lovers, I have sent you out to build.
I have nourished you and guided you, and you have

had the courage to build, to build beautifully. Upward spiring, tenderly fashioned, our cathedral grew . . . and you died, and new ones were born and the thought was carried on and on, until at last the sun shone down on the perfect whole, the triumph of Beauty. And the clouds were glad and wreathed themselves about it in a crown, and the winds were glad and caressed its carved, upward-flinging arms, and men were glad, and filled it with vibrations of music. And now . . . in flames! Oh, men, what ingratitude!

[*She sways.*]

NITO [*rushing to assist her*]. My Lady is faint.

LADY. Yes, help me, child. I am weak and old.

NITO. My Lady. My Lady. [*NITO helps her to the couch.*] Do you rest better now? Shall I bring salts or water?

LADY. No. No . . . [*After a minute.*] Sing me that song of yours, Nito, that song your mother taught you. That was a strangely beautiful song.

NITO. Oh, Lady, I could not sing that *now*.

LADY. I understand. All beautiful things must die now. It is a time of death. We must all die now. I have lived for thousands of years but now I am dying. Ugliness will rule now.

NITO. Oh, Lady, Lady.

[*She kneels at her feet, crying.*]

[*A pause. THE LADY lies back as if dead. It has grown darker. THE GREAT POET comes in, walking feebly.*]

POET [*calling outside*]. Lady, Lady. [*He enters.*] Lady. Where is the lady?

NITO. Oh, it is you, sir. Lady, awake. Someone is here.

POET. Go. I will awaken her.

[*NITO goes out.*]

POET [*bending over THE LADY*]. Lady, I have come back to you. Where is your mirror?

LADY [*reaching*]. The mirror . . . I had forgotten it. Here . . . Here . . .

POET [*louder*]. I have come back to you, Lady.

LADY [*awakening*]. You have come back to me? Who? It is you, the Great Poet. You have come seeking me at the end of all things?

POET. Yes, I have come. My feet are weary with the long way and my head is heavy with the things I have seen—blood and blackness and the roots of all human things. Let me look into the mirror, Lady. Let me look into the mirror.

LADY. I am so weak I can scarcely lift the mirror. . . . Here . . . [*She raises the mirror.*] Look long and deep.

POET. Ah!

LADY. Tell me what you see.

POET [*looking long and steadfastly*]. I see . . . I see . . . Never has it been so plain . . . Never has it been so sublime. To think how blind my eyes were before.

LADY. Tell me.

POET. I see three infinitely beautiful things, eternally new . . . Death—and Life—and Love.

RECRUITING IBSEN FOR THE ALLIES

D

ID Ibsen know Prussianism as it has been revealed to us? How did he react to it? These questions are answered in *Emperor and Galilean*, which is a protest against the German influence arising from the birth of Prussianism in 1870.

Ibsen himself calls the play "a world-historic drama." In it "he conceives of world-history as moving under the guidance of a Will which works through blinded, erring and sacrificed human instruments toward a 'third-empire' in which the jarring elements of flesh and spirit shall be reconciled." Here is a panoramic survey of human history that easily makes it demonstrable that Ibsen not only anticipated the *weltgeist* of our day but championed it. Moreover, Ibsen regarded *Emperor and Galilean* as his *chef d'oeuvre*. Writing from Dresden in July, 1871, to Frederick Hegel, his publisher, Ibsen confessed: "This book will be my chief work, and it is engrossing all my thoughts and all my time. That positive theory of life which the critics have demanded of me so long, they will get in it." To Ludwig Daae he wrote in February, 1873: "I will not say anything about my work except that I am confident that it will be my *hauptwerk*." Nineteen days later in a letter to the same correspondent he repeats: "The work which I am now bringing out will be my chief work." Let us reduce the larger "flesh and spirit" aspect of it to German history.

To impress us with the full force of facts and to remove any suspicions of unwarrantable assump-

tions in associating *Emperor and Galilean* with German history, there is Ibsen's letter to Julius Hoffory written from Munich February 26, 1888: "*Emperor and Galilean* is the first work which I wrote under German intellectual influences. . . . During my four years' stay in Rome I had occupied myself with all kinds of historical studies in view of writing *Emperor and Galilean* and had made notes for it; but I had evolved no distinct plan or plot, much less written any part of the drama. My view of life was still that of the Scandinavian Nationalist and I could not accommodate myself properly to the alien subject. Then came the experiences of Germany's great time. I was in Germany during the war and the development consequent to it. All this acted in many ways on me with the force of a transforming power. My theory of history and human life had until then been a national one; now it expanded into a social theory and I could write *Emperor and Galilean*. The play was completed in the spring of 1873."

Here is a man who first showed a strong reaction to Prussianism; who predicted that history would, one day, spit in the face of Norway and Sweden; who saw the possibility of freedom in Russia and who welcomed, looming up in his own day, the giant strength of the workingmen of our day. Ibsen is besides an advocate of much that is yet for the future and should therefore have some significance, social and perhaps political, in the post-bellum adjustment that is coming on.

Let us reduce the great literary superstructure of *Emperor and Galilean* to its foundation to show how it towers on Ibsen's reaction to the Prussian menace of 1870. But there are some preliminary considerations. Why did Ibsen live in Germany? Ibsen wanted to be a "champion of great ideas." For this

reason he left home to escape its biblical piety and later abandoned Scandinavia as narrow and uncongenial to spiritual projects. It was in Germany of those days that he found his real home. Except for a limited stay in Italy, 1878-9, he lived at Munich and Dresden from 1868 to 1891. It was because he found there the necessary intellectual ferment and freedom together with a spiritual sympathy that he wrote George Brandes: "I began by feeling myself to be a Norwegian, then I developed into a Scandinavian, and I have ended in Teutonism." He wrote "it is necessary to become a denizen of the great Teutonic house," and this is his reason: "It is abroad that we Scandinavians are to win our decisive battle; a victory in Germany and you will be master of the situation at home." It is readily understood then just what he means in writing Brandes in 1885, "I feel quite at home here, much more so than in my own home, so-called." Brandes had domesticated in Scandinavia, before Ibsen left, the thought of Darwin, Mill, Comte and Taine, but the soil was unproductive and barren of results and Ibsen preferred to remain, except for depressing summer visits, in exile for some twenty-seven years.

One must not get any false impression as to his feeling toward Germany as a nation. He wrote John Grieg from Rome in 1866: "It is quite true that I have a strong dislike not, as you rightly put it, of Germans, but of Germanism and Teutomania." This can be explained historically. One of Ibsen's main grievances against his own country was that it did not rush to the aid of Denmark against German aggression when Bismarck, who was playing the bigger game of throwing off Austrian domination, seized Schleswig-Holstein, later to absorb it into the Prussian kingdom. Here was a whole Danish population,

thought Ibsen, betrayed by its brothers in spite of solemn promises. And Denmark was the spiritual leader of all Scandinavia. Ibsen would have had his country fly to her succor though ten thousand times vain to do so. He wrote Bjornson in 1865: "If I had stayed longer at Berlin where I saw the triumphal entrance in April, with the howling rabble tumbling about among the trophies from Dybbøl, riding on the gun-carriages and spitting into the cannon—the cannon that received no help and went on shooting until they burst—I do not know how much of my reason I should have retained." In a letter to his mother-in-law, Magdalene Thoresen, he says of this same triumph: "I saw the rabble spit into the mouths of the cannon from Dybbøl, and to me it seemed an omen that history will one day spit in the face of Sweden and Norway because of their behavior then." At this moment Ibsen believed as he wrote Grieg, that the Germans were "our born enemies."

Ibsen apparently observed something in Germany that made him write to Brandes in 1870 from Dresden: "The old, illusory France has collapsed, and as soon as the new, real Prussia does the same, we shall be with one bound in a new age." "With what is the strength of Prussia as a state bought?" he asks. "With the merging of the individual in the political and geographic concept," is his answer. In other words, Ibsen had a socialistic "non-state theory." It was Bernard Shaw who first lectured on the socialistic aspects of Ibsen's plays in 1890. This is the basis of his book, "The Quintessence of Ibsen." In fact, before he left Grimstad Ibsen was identified with the workingmen's movement there. He belonged to no particular socialistic party, however, at any time in his life. He did not want any limitation of a political kind on his freedom of thought. An

intellectual evolutionary process was always going on with him. "It has become an absolute necessity to me to work quite independently and to shape my own course," he wrote. Thus Ibsen had arrived at a "non-state theory" of his own, and it was bitterly opposed to Prussianism as can be shown historically.

One of Ibsen's dreams was the creation of a great Scandinavia out of all the Danish peoples. Of course he had in mind a union that should grow out of their spiritual kinship. But in Germany he looked on an entirely different process of unification. Bismarck was the great genius, the iron chancellor, who proposed to unite the German people in quite a different way—*ferro et igni*. This man Bismarck "spoke of the people as an intangible body which possessed not the legal qualities of an individual and had no rights as opposed to those of the crown." He believed a "kindly despotism" was the best form of government for Alsace-Lorraine. He was the greatest vassal the Prussian crown ever had. He had no sympathy at all with democracy. "Fire and Sword," that was his method of making the German nation. "Blood and Iron," that was his famous prescription for all her troubles. With Austria he took the duchies of Schleswig-Holstein and Lauenburg by virtue of the conquest of Düppel. That was his first step. With Austria he quarreled over them and at Königgrätz or Sadowa forever threw off Austrian domination of German affairs. Incidentally he demanded the cession of Hanover, Saxony, and Hesse. Then France became jealous of the growing Prussian giant. "Give us Mayence and restore the Rhine frontier of 1814," she demanded. To all her threats Bismarck steadily replied, "Very well, then, let there be war." He had in mind a blood and iron process of uniting south Germany with the twenty-two states

north of the Main that had formed themselves into a "perpetual league." But France of that day must be compensated for Prussian territorial gains. Napoleon first wanted Belgium and then Luxemburg. He persuaded the King of Holland to cede Luxemburg when the military treaties of Bismarck with the south German states made it impossible, for Bismarck, he well knew, would make the cession of Luxemburg a *casus belli*. The *Zoll-Parlament* was Bismarck's next step in federating the German states. France and Austria did all they could to interfere. In 1868 the Customs-Parliament met in Berlin, the first representative body of the entire German nation. Meanwhile Bismarck established his famous "Reptile Fund" to spy on Germany's enemies. But in spite of all his efforts he succeeded only in achieving a North German Federation. The south still hung back. He knew it would take war to unite them. And Fate played into his hands. France, forever alert to quarrel with Prussia, finds the candidature of Prince Leopold, a Hohenzollern, for the Spanish throne her golden opportunity. So does Bismarck, who publishes his famous telegram, and presto!—"all the tongues and tribes of the Fatherland from the Baltic to the Black Forest and from Königsberg to Cologne crowded around the standard of Prussia with the burning enthusiasm of the old Teutonic Crusaders." Bismarck's dream of an united Germany was to come true and the Franco-German war was the blood and iron process of realizing it.

These were days that intensely interested Ibsen. He wrote Edmund Gosse in October, 1872: "It is a part of my own spiritual life which I am putting in this book (*Emperor and Galilean*); what I depict I have, under different conditions, gone through myself, and the historical subject chosen has a much

more intimate connection with the movements of our own time than one might at first imagine. The establishment of such a connection I regard as imperative in any modern practical treatment of such a remote subject if it is to arouse interest at all." The crux, then, of this whole argument was to find wrapped up in an ancient historical subject (Rome under Julian) the influence of Germany on Ibsen. Briefly, it is that Ibsen saw in German history as recounted above these aspects of Julian's lamentable reign—a ruthless political theory of state and divine right of kings with an absorption of the individual in the political concept.

For associating the play with German influence there is a broad hint in what Ibsen wrote Brandes from Dresden in October, 1873: "When you receive these lines *Emperor and Galilean* will probably be in your hands. The direction public affairs are taking abroad makes this work a more seasonable one than I myself had thought possible." The word "seasonable" undoubtedly refers to the great war of church and state in Germany, its *kulturkampf*. This was no other than a Pope or Kaiser drama itself and may have determined the title *Emperor and Galilean* which Ibsen at the last moment adopted.

Since the days of Luther, Germany had been to the Vatican protestant and heretic. The Vatican therefore leaned to France and Austria in their wars on Germany. At the court of the Pope a great war was frankly confessed to be imminent about 1870. France was expected to win it. Accordingly Pius IX. in anticipation of such a day prepared to re-establish the temporal power of the church as in the old days. An ecumenical council therefore met in St. Peter's, Rome, "and by this council the dogma of papal infallibility with all its appendages was ceremoniously

proclaimed on the 18th of July, 1870. On the following day the official declaration of war was handed to Germany by France." Now instead of victory France suffered defeat and the Italian king, Victor Emanuel, taking advantage of it, abolished forever in Italy the temporal power of the Pope. But the Roman Catholics in Germany, making a political party called the Centre, Clericals, or Blacks, intrigued against the government in support of the papal position on some domestic matters. Bismarck did all he could to conciliate them, but was forced to pass drastic laws against the Pope, who in turn refused to receive the German ambassador at the Vatican. Altogether such a hubbub was raised that Bismarck gradually had to yield in his legislation against the church. Here then was a great battle of church and state, of the kingdom of heaven versus the kingdom of this world, a real drama of Pope or Kaiser or Galilean and Emperor with which Ibsen was intimately acquainted. Italy was rejecting the Pope and the German people were successfully opposing the Emperor. Neither Emperor nor Galilean can rule exclusively, thinks Ibsen. The word "abroad" then in his letter must have referred to the defeat of the Pope's temporal power in Italy which was indirectly due to Germany. Four things must be remembered in reducing *Emperor and Galilean* to a protest against Prussianism:

(1) that the subject matter is historical and derived from the fourth century so that the German influence is historically disguised;

(2) that Ibsen, while eager for the creation of a great Scandinavia by a recognition of the spiritual kinship of its people, was a horrified spectator of Bismarck's iron and blood process of unification;

(3) that in the *kulturkampf* of Germany he saw the weakness of the national or political ideal, and in

the birth of Italy as a nation the weakness of the spiritual, as neither the spiritual nor the political ideal gave happiness to the workingmen;

(4) that Bismarck was uncompromising in his attitude toward the Red Specter, the Red Monster of Socialism that grew like a young giant and had to be choked.

Abstracting from the play which deals with ancient historical matter, those points which we want to illustrate in the conditions of the Germany of 1870 for the purpose of getting the German influence on Ibsen, let us make this statement: Julian as a thinker in the schools of philosophy and as a worshipper of the beautiful is led to discard Christianity or the purely spiritual and, in his day, the anti-political as well as the ugly. But as emperor he finds the people more obedient to an invisible authority moving within them than they are to that of the state, although it is outwardly and visibly manifested in the person of Julian as a god and an incarnation of divine right. He thinks that great victories over the Persians will unite all the warring factions among his people and vindicate his divine right. But he finds the people more at one with the invisible spirit within them than with him, their imperial god and their king. His death at the hands of a Christian convinces him that the invisible Galilean as a spiritual power distributed in the people has dispelled their allegiance to a political divinity.

Now let us state all of this in terms of German history of 1870. Since the days of Luther, Germany had been wonderfully protestant. She was free, vigorous, individual to such a degree that she was politically weak. Prussia finds the various principalities more obedient to all forms of freedom than to a national ideal. As for Prussia it will be remembered that since the days of Frederick I., who in 1701

“placed the crown upon his own head in token that he had received it without episcopal mediation direct from the King of Kings,” the ideal *A Deo Rex, A Rege Lex*, had prevailed. Accordingly, later on William IV. of Prussia thrice refused the crown of South Germany simply because the people and not the princes offered it. Here then was a political insistence on state claims and the divine right of kings. But it was Bismarck who was to fight for this ideal. He hoped by wars to unite a divided German people. And he for one thoroughly believed in Prussia. Of the German constitution he said, “Prussians we are and Prussians we shall remain. I know that in these words I but express the creed of the Prussian army and of the majority of my countrymen; and I hope to God that we shall remain Prussians long after this bit of paper has mouldered away like a withered autumn leaf.” He realized his dream of a German nation in the Austrian and the Franco-German wars. This is why Ibsen hated Germanism and the Teutonmania, as expressed by Bismarck, who thought that ethnically the Celtic race was the female sex and the Teuton peoples the masculine element permeating and fructifying all Europe.

Ibsen’s only hope could have been in the Red Specter that troubled Bismarck. At the general election of 1871 the Social-Democrats polled three per cent of the votes. In 1877 their votes were to count no less than half a million. Needless to say Bismarck viewed the progress of this young giant with dismay. The Prussian government in the person of Bismarck finds the people more at one with social democracy and religious toleration than they are with the state ideal and divine right of kings. Here our parallel stops. So much Ibsen had seen himself. We can therefore imagine his hatred of Bismarck, who made all considerations of the people subordinate to the

state's welfare. It was in defense of the iron and blood process that the Chancellor once said in the Reichstag, "For me always there has been only one compass and one pole-star towards which I steer, *salus publica*." Ibsen saw how as a politician Bismarck tried to unite the people into a nation by glorious wars, but finding that to fail, promised mere political reforms. To Ibsen, who had developed his ambition for a national Scandinavia into a race theory, this was a hollow mockery; it did not recognize the revolution in the spirit of man that no state reform could gratify. He therefore wanted to show the folly of it. He wanted to show that no freedom of a political kind such as the state offers will ever satisfy man. He wanted to show that men must be free of political necessity to express their individuality, thought and spirit. He laughed at the old ideals, worn out and tattered, that the politicians patched up periodically to the growing discontent of the people. He wanted, in effect, to show how the state must yield altogether to a spiritual union of all peoples in which they shall be absolutely free to evolve. He knew there is no stop to the evolutionary process and he wanted to remove as much as possible the friction in it. He would advocate an international socialism in which the will of the people is the state and therefore the friction of wars and revolutions almost negligible.

Now let us apply the parallel to German history of our own day that seems likely to witness the fall of Prussia as Ibsen wished. Again the German Empire if not in the person of an iron chancellor yet in a megalomaniac Wilhelm finds its people more at as Gerard in his latest book assures us. Again the iron and blood process is employed to unite them by one with social democracy than with autocracy. This was the case in 1914 as some authorities insist and

the force of a great victory that shall stamp autocracy with their approval and vindicate the divine right of kings. The great question is whether the Kaiser like the Czar and Julian will fall by the hand of social democracy obedient to the spirit in it rather than to the state. Will the free spirit of the German peoples assert itself or is the great international democracy of France, England and the United States the destined power? Clearly Ibsen knew the Prussian army as Frederick Harrison wrote of it in the seventies and as the French describe it in our day. It is also clear that he regarded it as the most powerful menace to the development of a free spirit in the people, a blind erring force that by its very strength was to challenge the free spirit or democracy of the people to a greater strength.

Some higher considerations of the play as an adaptation of Hegel's idea that truth grows out of thesis and antithesis into synthesis have been omitted to develop a substratum aspect of it. The play deals with paganism as a thesis to which Christianity is the antithesis, and looks for a synthesis of them in a "third-world empire." But the protest against Prussianism is plain enough. Julian falls because of his exaltation of the state ideal, and Christianity is a symbol of a free spirit in the people that has scant reverence for political divinity. Christianity is only a symbol with Ibsen. So much Ibsen had learned from Germany, and this is why *Emperor and Galilean* is a product of the German conditions around 1870, although it substitutes the particulars of ancient historical matter and has its larger theme in the antagonism of flesh and spirit. Ibsen was a poet with a keen appreciation of the Aristotelian definition that poetry is "a more philosophical and a higher thing than history."

E. F. FARQUHAR.

THE AVENGER

A FANTASY IN ONE ACT

By

CLARENDON ROSS

CHARACTERS

EUSTASIUS, a landowner.

GREGOR, a traveller.

[*The time is the remote past. The action takes place in an upper room in the castle of EUSTASIUS. The season is spring.*

At the back, at one side, is a heavy oaken door, standing open. Through the doorway is visible a winding stone stair. In the middle is a broad window, its depth the thickness of the castle walls. Adjoining the window is a canopied and curtained bed; the color of the bed drapery is crimson. The foot of the bed is toward the window. At the side of the bed is an oaken stool. In the center of the room stands a long and massive oaken table on which are a blackened tankard and a dark blue hood. The walls, entirely bare, are made of great blocks of gray stone.

The action begins at early dawn. Through the window are seen distant dark hills and paling stars. As the action advances, the day grows; at the end of the action, there is bright sunlight, and bloom-

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ing orchards are visible between the castle and the green and wooded hills.

The curtains of the bed are drawn aside. On the bed EUSTASIUS is sleeping. He is dressed in a gray woolen tunic and has gray hair and a gray beard. On the oaken stool sits GREGOR, facing the sleeper. He, too, has gray hair and a gray beard. He is dressed in a dark blue kirtle. GREGOR is nodding as the action begins; then he falls asleep.

EUSTASIUS stirs in his sleep. He sits up, looking intently at GREGOR; then he drops back, with his arms outstretched and his eyes closed.]

EUSTASIUS [*faintly*]. Kill me quickly.

GREGOR. [*He awakes and starts up, his hand going to a dagger in his belt; then he sits down again.*] What did you say?

EUSTASIUS. Kill me quickly.

GREGOR. You have been restless in your sleep, Eustasius; yet it took you a long time to wake up.

EUSTASIUS. Kill me quickly, Gregor.

GREGOR. I have been here since the moon went down; and the moon went down at twelve.

EUSTASIUS. Do not torture me.

GREGOR. Why so quickly, Eustasius? I will do it at sunrise—that was the time, you remember. You might have slept on. I should have awakened you in time! How is it that you sleep? Men about to die should be wakeful. It seems that you were not expecting me.

EUSTASIUS. Do it quickly, Gregor.

GREGOR. Why so quickly? Sunrise was the appointed hour, you remember. And an hour is not much when added to twenty years. Is not life sweet to you, Eustasius?

EUSTASIUS. It has never been sweet since that morning twenty years ago.

GREGOR. You have been afraid. That was my plan—to keep you waiting for me, in fear, for exactly twenty years—to cut off the best twenty years of your life—to make you suffer a living death—from sunrise to sunrise, and a night of twenty years between. Why did you not run away?

EUSTASIUS. You would have followed me.

GREGOR. Good! You remembered that warning. But you might have fought me—killed me—killed me by stealth.

EUSTASIUS. You would have escaped me.

GREGOR. Good! You remembered that, too. You have a good memory, Eustasius.

EUSTASIUS. I have lived on little but memory—these twenty years—memory and expectation.

GREGOR. Then you were expecting me? You expected me to be here this morning—punctual?

EUSTASIUS. I have thought of little else for twenty years. It has always been on my mind.

GREGOR. Good! That was my plan—to keep you waiting for me for twenty years. But why do you not defend yourself? Why do you not struggle with me?

EUSTASIUS. Defend myself? I have nothing to defend—I am an old man.

GREGOR. An old man? You are just my age; I am but fifty.

EUSTASIUS. I am an old man.

GREGOR. You are old in fear. That was my plan—to cut off twenty years of your life in fear. You were no coward when we were boys. You became a coward twenty years ago when you—

EUSTASIUS. [*He sits up, drawing his hand across his eyes.*] Do not speak of it!

GREGOR. And you have been a coward ever since. You were born a coward, no doubt. Cowardice was born in you, but it lay hidden in you until that morning—

EUSTASIUS. I am not a coward, Gregor! I made a mistake—a horrible mistake—in rashness, and my soul has paid penance ever since. I am old now—I care not for life. I am glad that death is so near. [*He drops back on the bed.*]

GREGOR. I found the door wide open—no servants about—no preparation for me. It is like drowning a dog with a stone. And yet all is well, very well;—I have been on your mind to the last minute, for twenty years. I could not ask more. You await death. You are one who has known for twenty years the exact hour of his death. Many people would like to know that—the exact hour when death is to come. You have been fortunate in your experience. You are the only man who has ever known that—except the men whose hour of execution was set.

EUSTASIUS. People would not like to know that, Gregor! If they were given the chance to know, they would refuse. I did not ask to know it. It was thrust upon me.

GREGOR. Thrust upon you, say you? Pray, who thrust it upon you? Did you not invite it? Were you not the cause of all? Did you not—

EUSTASIUS. [*He sits up.*] Do not speak of it!

GREGOR. You are an old man—old men can stand things. You can stand anything; so your experience has led me to believe. As I was saying—

EUSTASIUS. Gregor! For the love of God! [*He sinks back on the bed.*]

GREGOR. You brought it all on yourself—twenty

years ago this morning. I passed the place this midnight—

EUSTASIUS. Have mercy!

GREGOR. I passed the place at midnight. The tree has rotted. Long ago you took away the bloody stone. Eustasius, what did you do with that stone?

EUSTASIUS [*with the calm of exhaustion*]. I threw it into the clear stream.

GREGOR. Why did you not throw yourself into the clear stream?

EUSTASIUS. I lived on—to care for his children.

GREGOR. So that is your penance! You have been trying to wipe out your crime by good deeds.

EUSTASIUS. I cannot wipe out crime. Only God can do that.

GREGOR. I hardly believe that all the good deeds in the world would blot out that one horrible deed!

EUSTASIUS. That is for God to judge.

GREGOR. You are trusting to God, are you? You want to live forever after doing that murder! You coward! You are afraid to die! You are afraid to meet God!

EUSTASIUS [*sitting up*]. I am not afraid to meet God! I am not trusting to God! I am not afraid to die! Kill me! You will see. [*He sinks back.*]

GREGOR. I will do it at sunrise. Be assured.

EUSTASIUS. Why did you not kill me at the time?

GREGOR. You are wandering. Your memory is not so good as I thought. Eustasius, why have I waited these twenty years?

EUSTASIUS. To torture me!

GREGOR. Exactly. I wanted the blood to stain your soul as well as your hands. The clear stream cleansed the stone, but there is no clear stream for you, Eustasius! The stain is deep!

EUSTASIUS. It is deep. But the torture did not make it so.

GREGOR. It did not? It made you remember, Eustasius! And it gave you a foretaste of things to be hereafter. The torture is your earthly punishment, which is but a foreshadowing. I have read in a book that the bodily torment which came upon Herod, who slew the innocent, was also a manifestation of the torment that he would suffer eternally.

EUSTASIUS. It is time! It is growing very light. [*The blossoming orchards become dimly visible.*]

GREGOR. Yet a little while. So you want to die?

EUSTASIUS. Do not torture me longer! I have known the day of my death for twenty years.

GREGOR. You are well nigh mad, Eustasius.

EUSTASIUS. Do not tell me that!

GREGOR. Why did you not kill me before I awoke? You awakened first.

EUSTASIUS. Kill you? I have been waiting for you to kill me. I have no desire to kill you. I have had blood enough. God does the avenging.

GREGOR. So you think I ought to be punished?

EUSTASIUS. I am not saying that—I did not mean that. I mean—God is the avenger, if there is to be vengeance.

GREGOR. Suppose I had not returned.

EUSTASIUS. You said you would take good care of yourself.

GREGOR. Good! Your memory improves. Yes, Eustasius, I have taken good care of myself—very good care. And I have lived, too, while you have been dying. That was my plan, you remember—to live while you died. I have traveled far. I have seen all sorts and conditions of men. I have lived! Now that I am getting old, I return. I shall be

hanged for killing you. I expect to give myself up. But I have lived, and you have died!

EUSTASIUS. [*He sits up, looking intently at GREGOR, and does not lie down again.*] Are you old, too, Gregor?

GREGOR. I am growing old. See you not? Old men are lonely. There is nothing in old age.

EUSTASIUS. Why are you old, Gregor?

GREGOR [*after a pause*]. I know not.

EUSTASIUS. You are old with thinking of age. And you say you have lived! When you never forgot me!

GREGOR. Forgot you! No! You have always been in my mind. I have counted the days, the months, the years; and at every sunrise I vowed my vow.

EUSTASIUS. I am sorry, Gregor. I have wrecked your life as well as my own.

GREGOR. What say you? My life wrecked? I have traveled far and wide. I have seen cities and strange lands. I have lived!

EUSTASIUS. To what purpose? Simply to come at the end of it all and kill an old man who wants to die. All this time you have simply been waiting—waiting till the day. To make me suffer—to kill me—this has been your sole aim in life. It was a worthless aim, Gregor. You have not lived! You, too, have died! I am sorry, Gregor. I was the cause of it all. You have been a great burden to me; but I have been no less a burden to you.

GREGOR. I have died? You dream! [*Uneasy and pensive.*] But I have grown weary with thinking of you—and the appointed day—today—so far in the future. To think, I fell asleep on the morning of vengeance! I fell asleep through weariness. But it will soon be done.

EUSTASIUS. And soon we shall not be a burden to each other.

[*The blossoming orchards become distinct with colors of white and pink. A pause ensues.*]

EUSTASIUS. The sun will soon be out, Gregor!

GREGOR [*rousing himself*]. Yet a little while. [*A pause follows.*] I found the door wide open—no servants about—and you asleep. How could you sleep?

EUSTASIUS. Through weariness—and relief. I was glad that death was nigh.

GREGOR. But you hoped that I would not come!

EUSTASIUS. No. And I knew you would come. Besides, I had sent out messengers to look for you. Yesterday you were seen among the hills.

GREGOR. Messengers! You were eager for me? You were not afraid?

EUSTASIUS. I have been much alone. I have grown old. Lonely old men become resigned.

GREGOR. You awaited me calmly! You slept! It would have been just as well had you died before this hour, seeing that you are no longer afraid. You would still have had some years of torture, and I—well, I should still have lived.

EUSTASIUS. Lived! On what? For what? Vengeance. And supposing you had come here this morning and found that I had died long since?

GREGOR [*musings*]. I know not. I am grown old.

EUSTASIUS. What good is your killing me going to do you, Gregor?

GREGOR. None—only it will be the finishing of my vow.

EUSTASIUS. You have wrecked your life with vengeance long planned, and now, by killing me, you may wreck your life eternal. Who knows? Gregor, I have sinned—I am the cause of it all; but this time,

I believe, you will be staining your own hands with blood. This stain will not be mine. Gregor, do not wreck your soul because of me; I am not worth it.

GREGOR. I long for peace.

EUSTASIUS. Yes, perhaps you can live on in peace, having got rid of your burden.

GREGOR. You wander. I shall be hanged. I long for—the end.

EUSTASIUS. Is life no longer sweet to you, Gregor?

GREGOR. I have lived—as you say—with one aim—vengeance. My goal I set far ahead of me—vengeance. I set it too far ahead. I did not expect you to be old! Nor did I expect to find you unafraid! My vengeance is but a husk. Yet I have lived with vengeance, and when my vengeance is taken away from me, I have nothing else to cherish; for I, too, am grown old. I did not expect to be old! [*His head droops in his hands.*]

EUSTASIUS. Do not give yourself up, after I am dead. You can travel again, and see the world. And perhaps you can make your peace with God.

GREGOR. Speak not of God. There has never been any peace between God and me, and I hardly think that there can ever be any.

EUSTASIUS. Hear me, Gregor! I am guilty. I deserved these twenty years. If only your life had not been darkened meanwhile! And so you should have killed me at the time. I believe that God would have held you guiltless then. But I know that you are guiltless now. All that I have suffered I have deserved! And your hand is not yet stained! You should not kill me, Gregor. Cast off the burden, and forget me in some distant land. The twenty years are finished. I shall never be free—I have sinned. But you are free—free!

GREGOR. Distant land? There is nothing more

for me to see or do. I do not desire to travel more. I should like to rest. But I have no home—no wife—no sons and daughters. I am like you, Eustasius; I have grown old.

EUSTASIUS. No wife. No children. You have denied yourself, Gregor!

GREGOR. No more than you! Where is your wife? Where are your sons? What place has there been in your life for sons? I have wrecked your life also, Eustasius.

EUSTASIUS. You should have killed me by the clear stream long ago.

GREGOR. By the clear stream—there is no clear stream for me, Eustasius! There might have been then, but not now.

EUSTASIUS. God is the judge.

[*It is bright sunlight. GREGOR rises and puts on his hood.*]

GREGOR. Farewell, Eustasius! I cannot kill. I have done that in my heart already. I come not again. I go—to make my peace.

EUSTASIUS [*rising from the bed*]. Go not, Gregor. Stay with me. I have plenty. There are some years yet.

GREGOR. Stay with you? After these twenty years! After all I have done!

EUSTASIUS. We understand that now. I have plenty. Who knows what we may not find to do when we are together? Take me on a journey. I have seen nothing. I have always been here.

GREGOR. Poor Eustasius! Do you not loathe me?

EUSTASIUS. Stay with me! [*He grasps GREGOR's hands.*] Gregor! Our boyhood was beautiful! All is not gone! I begin to remember the long ago that I had ceased to remember. And I dream of things yet to be. We will rest—rest—together.

GREGOR. But first I must go on a little journey. Among the hills I abandoned some books, and trinkets, and money, and a silver crucifix. I will return tonight.

EUSTASIUS. We will have a banquet! There is wine that has aged all these years. And you will tell me about all the things you have seen!

GREGOR [*going*]. I will return at sunset—without fail.

[GREGOR *goes out the door and down the winding stair*. EUSTASIUS *goes over to the window*. *A pause ensues.*]

EUSTASIUS [*hallooing*]. God speed you, Gregor!

GREGOR [*from below*]. God be with you, Eustasius!

Curtain.

PLAYWRIGHTS' TEXTS



O MORE interesting controversy has been waged in literary circles than that which has been going on recently in the columns of the *London Times* with reference to the changes made in the text of a play during the course of its production.

The controversy began with Shakespeare and the problem of the discrepancies in language to be observed in the various contemporary editions of his works. Did Shakespeare make the changes? Were they due to actors' errors, preserved in prompt-books and later used for printer's copy? What became of the duplicates, if such existed? These questions brought forth varying opinions from a large number of critics and scholars, but the controversy finally simmered down to a vigorous if polite duel between the well-known Shakespearean, Alfred W. Pollard, and a very able anonymous critic, who signed himself "S."

It was the latter who brought forth a highly important contribution to the question at issue. Believing that the fundamental principles by which our leading dramatists are guided when preparing their plays for the stage and the press cannot differ to any great degree from those of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, he asked three eminent playwrights—Sir Arthur Wing Pinero, Henry Arthur Jones, and George Bernard Shaw—to set forth each his own methods, while expressing an opinion, briefly stated, on the merits of the controversy. He requested details whereby one might estimate their

views in the light of their methods, of changes (if any) made during rehearsal or progress of the play, and of preparation for the press, with regard to corrections, when the manuscript text of their plays was being made into a book. He obtained these statements:

SIR ARTHUR WING PINERO

The best answer I can make to your main question is to send you the accompanying privately-printed book of one of my plays. This book is a copy of my manuscript—exact, save for a few revisions made in correcting the proofs—and it is the book of the play as performed by the actors, and also the text, as regards both business and action, of the book as published later by Mr. Heinemann. It has been the same with all my pieces for many years past. Beyond this, I may tell you that it is my practice to have my plays “set up” by the printer, act by act. That is, when I have finished my first act it is put into type before I begin my second. I follow the same course with the second, and so on. Very rarely do I make any alteration in these acts once they are in print.

In answer to your particular inquiry as to whether I ever in a second, or any subsequent, edition make alterations in my text, I have on two or three occasions done so: but the alterations have been very slight—the change of a word here or there—and it is certainly not usual with me to do this.

Although I don't profess to know much of other men's methods, I am under the impression that mine is not one generally followed. I fear, therefore, that I am not contributing anything of much value to your argument.

As to Shakespeare, the first state of his plays—

the state in which they were first hurriedly presented to the public—was, it is reasonable to suppose, a very rough one. His principal consideration must have been to keep his theatre supplied, and he can have had precious little time to smooth and polish. It is equally reasonable to suppose that later he *did* subject his work to a process of reconsideration, revision, and, in some instances, elaboration. This, I fancy, is the point you want to make; if so, I agree with you.

Yours always truly,

ARTHUR PINERO.

HENRY ARTHUR JONES

Before 1893 my plays were copied or typed from my MS., and were very much cut and pruned (though not largely revised or altered) during rehearsals and after production. I did not keep my earlier MSS., but the printed editions do not contain anything that is not my text; nor did the acting versions differ, except very trivially, from my MS.; though during rehearsals I found it often necessary to make cuts.

By the year 1893 I had learned my trade, and I had gained authority to enforce my wishes. In 1893 Tree produced my play *The Tempter*. I printed it before production, but placed some passages in brackets which I found to drag when spoken. Since *The Tempter* I have (with one or two exceptions of no account) printed my plays before beginning rehearsals and the actors have always rehearsed from the printed text. *The Masqueraders*, *The Liars*, *The Physician*, *The Case of Rebellious Susan*, *The Hypocrites*, *Mrs. Dane's Defence*, *Whitewashing Julia*, and others were all played exactly as printed privately. But in publishing them I made a few minor cuts and alterations, nothing of great importance.

The Manoeuvres of Jane (Haymarket, 1898) was

not successful on the first night, and I made a cut of a page or two at the end of the third act. It ran three hundred nights, and in publishing this play I printed it as played. In rehearsing *The Liars* lately at the St. James's I found that many trifling alterations had been made in the prompt book. Most of these had crept in from actors' mistakes and additions. Many of these are unconscious and involuntary—an actor's memory fails him, and he substitutes some paraphrase of his own, and afterwards repeats it. It gets put in the prompt copy as the correct text.

In all performances of modern plays there are nightly involuntary little alterations of odd words. This source of error would not be so likely to occur in verse where the metre tends to keep the actor right. I do not think it would be wise to insist too much on a parallel between modern and Elizabethan practice, where methods are so different. But I think you may safely rely on these generalities.

Actors will always gag and try to improve the author's text, and, however carefully they are watched, some of their lines will get into the prompt copy.

In the far more hurried and less elaborate Elizabethan production of plays an author would be more likely to see reason for changes in the construction, and for alteration in the text, of his plays than would a modern author in our careful and minute productions today.

I have always carefully gone through the privately printed version before publishing, and though only in *The Manoeuvres of Jane* have I made any substantial alteration, yet I should certainly make any change that would improve the play in my opinion.

Always yrs.,

HENRY ARTHUR JONES.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

I cannot give you a general answer covering all the plays. When I began I could not get my plays acted in this country at all. I therefore proposed to publish them as books. Heinemann, whom I consulted, told me that plays were not read in this country; those which were published sold in batches according to the number of characters in the play; one copy per character and one for the prompter, showing that they were purchased for the rehearsing of amateur performances and for no other purposes. He allowed me to see an actual ledger account to satisfy me on the point.

I contended that the business was in a vicious circle: that plays were issued in unreadable acting versions, with revolting stage directions like telegrams with all the definite articles left out, and peppered with technical prompter's terms that insulted the human imagination: for example—

SIKES. Take that, damn you. [*Strikes her with bludgeon.*]

NANCY. Oh, God forgive you, Bill. [*Staggers—business with eyes—dies.*]

SIKES. Now to escape the police. [*Takes hat from table R. C.; brushes it with elbow, grinding teeth; crosses L. C. up; sees ghost; shrieks; back to R. C. and exit R. U. E.*]

I asked whether anyone could read *Oliver Twist* if Dickens had written it in this way; and I made a resolution, which is still unbroken, that no play of mine, however full its stage directions, should ever mention the stage or use any technical terms that could remind the reader of the theatre or destroy the imaginative illusion. Grant Richards, who was

then starting in business, published two volumes of plays written in this manner and their success practically re-established the public habit of reading plays, though I am sorry to say that my system of stage direction is so little understood that even burlesques of it often include references to "the centre of the stage," and such specifications as "to the right of the stage, a small table," etc. Naturally, what my parodists overlooked is not noticed by authors generally; and though I am followed purely as a fashion, the point of my fashion is missed, and telegram English and references to the theatrical mechanism still survive, and still make people prefer novels to plays as instruments to produce illusion.

This by the way. What you are concerned with is the fact that whereas my earlier plays were printed first and acted afterwards, my later ones were "produced" by me, and acted, years before they were collected into volumes, to be finally revised for press in the light of my practical stage experience of them, and prefaced by essays to which they had no more relation (if so much) than a text has to a sermon.

Let me illustrate the consequences by an example. My *Caesar and Cleopatra* was written and published before it was acted. It was, except for the old copy-righting farce which has no importance and is now abolished by the last Copyright Act, first produced in Berlin. During the rehearsals it was discovered that I had forgotten to remove one of the characters, Apollodorus the Sicilian (the hero of the carpet incident), from the stage in the third act. I had accordingly to write in a speech or two to dismiss him; and this speech of course appears in the later editions and is not in the earlier ones. Later on, when Forbes Robertson, for whom the part of Caesar was written,

was at last able to take it up, he said one day at rehearsal that the scene with Septimius in the second act, which is one of the great acting points in the play, required a little more explanation and additional preparatory ferment to enable him to make the most of it, and I immediately wrote in about a dozen speeches to get it right for him. An edition printed from Forbes Robertson's prompt copy would contain those speeches, which I regret to say I have been too lazy to have inserted in my own editions.

But there is a further complication. The great length of *Caesar and Cleopatra* led to several expedients to shorten it. I first cut out the third act; but the fascination of this episode of fun for the actors, and its success in Berlin, produced a rebellion against the author, and it had to be restored. To make room for it I struck out the first scenes of the first and fourth acts, and replaced them by a prologue to be spoken by the god Ra. But the difficulty was that this tremendous exordium required another Forbes Robertson to deliver it, and the English stage produces only one at a time. But several ambitious actors tackled it and established this version for a time on the stage. Now suppose some XX century Heminge and Condell print in folio a version of the play from the authentic prompt copies used by our Burbage, the original Caesar, and take my editions as the equivalent of the Shakespearean quartos. The quartos will have scenes omitted in the folio and the folio will have an entirely different opening and several passages omitted from the quartos. The *Literary Supplement* of that day will be able to keep a correspondence going for months about the discrepancies.

Man and Superman has also its vicissitudes. If its text had to be put together from prompt books

and scene plots, the materials would be, first, a three-act comedy, and second, a piece of an indescribable *genre* entitled *A Dream of Don Juan in Hell*, the connection between them being discovered by the documents of later performances in which this *Dream*, with an additional scene to explain its introduction, was performed as the third act of the comedy.

From *John Bull's Other Island* to *Pygmalion*, the prompt copies and the printed editions should be identical because the plays passed through the furnace of production by the author before they were passed for press, but they are not quite so. I made revisions, of no great extent, but of importance (as such things go) in many of them. And further changes are possible. The rehearsals of further revivals may suggest changes to me. An actor at loss for his line may improvise one happy enough to be annexed by an author who has always taken his goods where he found them and been thankful. The passage that was just right for one actress may be just wrong for another, and may be modified accordingly. The changes need not be improvements; they may be adaptations to inevitable circumstances. The more skilful an author is, the more apt he is to adapt his work to the conditions instead of quarrelling with them.

You must consider also that an author may make a change and neglect to make the contingent changes it involves. Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* is played to this day with alternative scenes containing the revelation of Portia's death retained together. Probably Shakespeare never dreamt that any producer would be unobservant enough not to see that the Brutus-Cassius quarrel scene, evidently written in later to strengthen the end of the play, involved the

omission of the earlier version; but he may have forgotten all about it. In *Fanny's First Play* the third act was written as two acts with an interval of a month between; but I hate these violations of the very valuable unity of time, and finally I ran the two acts together as they now stand. But, if you please, I never took the trouble to make the contingent alterations, and the act now presents the phenomenon called "double-time," like *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which is both a night and a week, my act being both an afternoon and a month.

The long and the short of it is that any play that has passed through the hands of the author in several successive theatrical productions and literary editions may present wide variations, all equally authentic, and that the alterations, if their order of date can be established, are not necessarily intended as refinements and improvements (except in the literary versions) but may be adaptations to theatrical circumstances more or less favorable. And, I repeat, it is not the ablest author who stands most obstinately by his original text, and can produce his effect only in one way: on the contrary, the able author has to check a tendency in himself to play about with his work and perform *tours de force* of mere adroitness at the risk sometimes of overlooking serious damage to his original inspiration.

You may of course use this letter as you please. Excuse its haste. It is only a rough and ready memorandum to assist you.

Yours sincerely,
G. BERNARD SHAW.

In conclusion "S" comments:

"It will be seen that even so finished and deliberate a writer as Mr. Bernard Shaw, whose copy is amazingly clean, revises his plays for the press in the

light of his practical stage experience of them; and, as he shows, there is abundant evidence of variations in certain of his plays the cause of which not the most intelligent and ingenious bibliographers could even guess at from the text before them, or would accept as probable, unless they had direct information or proof of the complicated facts."

MAX J. HERZBERG.

THE TWINS OF BERGAMO*

Translated and arranged from the French of
Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian

By
OLIVER FARNSWORTH

CHARACTERS

YOUNG ARLEQUIN
ARLEQUIN

NERINE
ROSETTE

The scene is in Paris, before Rosette's house.

[*From the terrace is a prospect of the irregular roofs of the city of Paris, touched by the lingering sun. Just in front of the terrace is the low basin of an old fountain.*

On one side, ROSETTE's house, projecting into the square, has its entrance door partly hidden by a little round tower of the fifteenth century, which occupies the second story only, and contains a window. Against the wall of the house, near the door, is a stone bench.

Facing the house is the high wall of a garden, covered with creepers.

ARLEQUIN is disclosed clinging to the fountain in despair. He has no hope of escaping NERINE, who has been pursuing him implacably. Finally he dashes into the open as she approaches him,

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and with arms outstretched he supports himself against the garden wall, figuratively baring his breast to her shafts, a pathetic figure. His sensitive nature is outraged by this pursuit, and he quivers with dread. NERINE follows him, the fury of love which is just turning to hate dominating her.]

NERINE. I shall follow you everywhere.

ARLEQUIN. Just as you please; the street is free.

NERINE. I shall find out what you do, and where you go.

ARLEQUIN. You will not find out anything; for I am going to stay here and do nothing.

NERINE. But tell me, I entreat. . . . [*For a moment her old love returns and her tone softens.*]

ARLEQUIN. What?

NERINE. You are quite sure I love you?

ARLEQUIN. Yes.

NERINE. And you—do you love me?

ARLEQUIN. No. [*He drops his arms with an air of finality.*]

NERINE. And do you think, you deceiver . . .

ARLEQUIN. Just a minute, Mademoiselle Nerine: are you capable of listening to me calmly for one moment?

NERINE. Yes, yes, speak! I am listening. I am anxious to know how you can excuse yourself for that indifference—that coldness which makes my life so unhappy, how you can convince me . . . but speak, anyway. I am listening calmly.

ARLEQUIN. So I see, but your calmness scares me.

NERINE. Well, explain yourself, justify yourself; go on, speak!

ARLEQUIN. Be just, Mademoiselle Nerine; you

know very well that never in my life have I spoken to you of love. So, according to that . . .

NERINE. [*With a stamp of her foot she moves toward him, while he retreats a step at each epithet.*] You never have, you wretch? You never have spoken to me of love! Do you remember the early days when you were with the family? How you used to anticipate anything which might please me! How you used to hurry and do the work which I was supposed to share! When you approached me, it was with that gentle, tender air which you can assume when you want to, you monster! And you don't call that love! Say, rather, that you have ceased to care for me; tell me that another, more fortunate than I, has taken your heart from me. But don't flatter yourself that anyone shall take away my property without suffering the consequences. No, traitor! No, deceiver! I shall have my revenge; be sure of that! I shall punish your disdain; and since my tenderest love has only made you ungrateful, I shall do my best to hate you, and so merit your indifference, just as I once did my best to love you.

ARLEQUIN. If you keep on listening to me like that, you will never be able to hear me.

NERINE. Why don't you speak—defend yourself? Take advantage of this momentary calmness.

ARLEQUIN. [*Facing her.*] As you know, Mademoiselle Nerine, I entered the service of your employers six months ago.

NERINE. Well, well, what of that?

ARLEQUIN. When I first came into the house, I tried to gain everybody's friendship; you were more civil to me than anybody else; I was nicer to you. Gradually your kind attentions turned to love—that was not my fault. You did not consult me, for if you had, I should have said: "Mademoiselle Nerine, it is

not worth while, your loving me, for I am spoken for." [*Crossing his feet and folding his arms, he gazes dreamily at ROSETTE's window.*]

NERINE. What! What do you mean? Do you think . . .

ARLEQUIN. Let's continue talking calmly. Yes, Mademoiselle, I love another! I loved her before I ever knew you; but for that, you might perhaps have had the preference. You see I am still polite—do be reasonable, Mademoiselle Nerine. Hang it! I never have done you any harm—why do you love me? [*Clasping his hands earnestly, he takes a step toward her, only to recoil at her outburst; then, deafened and suffering, he turns from her and clings to the vines, hiding his head on his arm.*]

NERINE. [*In the greatest fury.*] Well, since you wish it, you can count on the most implacable hatred. From now on I forbid your speaking to me, or looking at me, or even being where I am. Deceiver! I shall prove to you that you did not deserve a woman like me. And don't imagine that you can laugh about it with your new mistress, and poke fun at my grief—no, no, I shall find a way to avenge myself. [*She pursues him around the square.*] I shall discover my rival; I shall pursue you both; I shall stir up her jealousy and yours; I shall make you disagree; make you unhappy one through the other; I shall make your home a hell, and to torment you will be my only occupation and my only pleasure in life. Farewell! [*She goes out.*]

ARLEQUIN. [*Alone.*] I shall never get used to that woman's way of showing affection; I quiver like a leaf every time she talks about love. Oh, how different Rosette is! [*With a kiss to the window.*] When I am with her I never tremble at anything, unless it is for fear of not doing enough to please her. Luckily,

I am to marry her tomorrow. Well, in spite of our marriage, I feel that I shall always have that fear. Why, here she is! [ROSETTE comes from the house, holding in her hand a miniature in its case.]

ROSETTE. How do you do, my dear. I was impatiently awaiting you. I have never felt so bored as today. It is probably because I am to marry you tomorrow, and the day before a great day is very long. [Rosette's tone throughout is gracious and quieting, almost motherly. To her ARLEQUIN is a strange, partly-tamed creature, a graceful, frail chameleon, and she instinctively employs all her protective power to soothe and to encourage him.]

ARLEQUIN. I am like you, my dear. Although I listen every minute for the clock, it strikes only once an hour; and when we are together, the thing strikes the hour every minute.

ROSETTE. I hope our marriage will not regulate that clock.

ARLEQUIN. What have you there? Come, show it quickly; I am in a hurry.

ROSETTE. For you, for it is myself.

ARLEQUIN. [Looking at the portrait.] What! Yes, it's you! You are there [pointing to the portrait]; you are there [pointing to ROSETTE]; you are here [pointing to his heart]; you are everywhere. I am no longer surprised that I see you everywhere.

ROSETTE. My dear, long ago I gave you my heart; today here is my portrait, and tomorrow I shall be yours.

ARLEQUIN. [Looking at the portrait.] How pretty it is! It was an artist who did that, my dear? I am sorry; he is surely in love with you, that artist, for in order to paint the picture, you must look at the person. Oh, it is really you! [He kisses it.] The more I kiss this, the more I long to kiss you. But no,

I am to wed you tomorrow; I have never robbed anybody; I must not begin by robbing myself. [*He starts to put the miniature into his pocket.*]

ROSETTE. Give me back the portrait, my dear; the artist wants to touch it up a little; it's only a moment's work. If you will come with me, you can have it directly.

ARLEQUIN. [*He gives her the picture.*] No, I cannot go, for my master is waiting for me to give him his keys. We had a quarrel yesterday; he refused me permission to get married; I told him he might look for another servant. He flew into a passion and turned me off without paying me my wages. [*He weeps bitterly, swaying in exaggerated grief.*]

ROSETTE. Don't worry. I am rich, and tomorrow my fortune and my hand will be yours. Go finish your business, and come back for this picture before night.

ARLEQUIN. I shall not fail to. What provokes me most about my master's anger is that I expected him to take in my place my twin brother, who is in Italy. With that idea in mind, I wrote him to come at once and join me in Paris. He will arrive some morning, and I shall not be able to place him.

ROSETTE. We will take care of him; don't be disturbed about it.

ARLEQUIN. [*His cheerfulness is suddenly restored as he prattles about his brother.*] Oh, I am quite sure you will like my brother; he is delightful, always lively, always good natured; and then, we resemble each other so closely that it is difficult to distinguish us apart. On the whole, I am very glad he has not yet come; for you might perhaps have married him in my place, without suspecting it.

ROSETTE. [*Seriously.*] Oh, no, my dear; the one

we love has not his like. But you forget your master is waiting for you.

ARLEQUIN. Now that you mention it, he surely is waiting for me! I must leave. Good-bye, my love. Try to make the artist hurry. [*He goes, after kissing her hand.*]

ROSETTE. Yes, yes, good-bye.

ARLEQUIN. [*Coming back.*] My love, do not forget that today is the day before tomorrow.

ROSETTE. Rest assured—only go.

ARLEQUIN. Oh, I am going; good-bye. [*He returns.*] My love, you do not know how terribly afraid I am of dying before it is tomorrow. If I should die, would that break off our marriage?

ROSETTE. If that happens, I promise to die, too. Are you satisfied?

ARLEQUIN. Oh! That is too much; if I can only see you mourning for me, that is enough.

ROSETTE. [*Smiling at his childishness.*] Are you never going?

ARLEQUIN. I am off. Good-bye, my dear Rosette. [*He kisses her hand again and takes off his hat to her portrait, saying*] Good-bye, friend!

ROSETTE. [*Alone.*] How he loves me! How happy I am! I must go at once and have this portrait finished; and since it is on my account that he is losing all his master owes him, I will put into this case all my ready money. The keenest pleasure of love is giving to the one we care for. [*She goes out.* YOUNG ARLEQUIN is heard, singing beyond the wall. He appears, with a guitar on his back. It is a tiny thing, a toy.]

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. [*He sings.*]

Contented e'er, nor sad for long,

I fear not misery nor woe;

To make them vanish as I go,
I speed my troubles with a song.

My life is often hard to bear;
I have my burdens—each has his.
My gayety, my care-free air,
To me far more than fortune is.

For all the grief which one year hath,
One moment's pleasure makes amend.
When I am at the journey's end
No longer think I of the path;

Nor fear the changing whim of fate,
Which scatters good and bad alike;
Work, rest, heartache, joy roseate—
I take things as they come, manlike.

[Sitting on the stone bench he sings his little ditty, and at the boastful word 'manlike' he throws back his head and squares his shoulders; then, giving a tired, little laugh, he sinks back with an air of dejection.]

With all my singing, I can't forget that I am hungry. My! My brother must be crazy; he writes to me at Bergamo to come and join him in Paris, and forgets to give me his address. I have already asked more than a hundred people where Monsieur Arlequin lives, the footman; their only reply was a burst of laughter. In this country they are fond of laughing. Oh, I shall laugh, too, after I have had something to eat. How foolish to say one can get used to anything! I have been hungry for more than three days, and I can't get used to it. Well, courage! *[Jumping up.]* Perhaps I shall make my fortune here. I will teach Italian; I can play the guitar; that helps to make your way in the world. Besides, I have heard it said that

in France they always prefer a mediocre person, if he is a foreigner, to a talented man who is a mere native. I am a foreigner; so I shall make my way. In the meantime [*looking around*], I should like to find my brother. [*Facing door.*] I have an idea: I am going to knock at every door I see; so I shall certainly find him at last. Well, let's begin with this one. [*He knocks, listens, then knocks again at ROSETTE's door. She comes up behind him, returning from the portrait painter's.*]

ROSETTE. Don't knock so loud; here, here is my picture. It is finished. [*Giving him the case.*] I haven't time to talk with you; it is getting dark; I must go into the house. I shall expect you tomorrow at eight o'clock; our marriage will be at nine. Good-bye, my love; until then, think ever of Rosette. [*She goes in, leaving YOUNG ARLEQUIN stupefied, with the case in his hand. The twilight glow has been slowly fading, and now a watchman crosses at the back, swinging his lantern.*]

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. I had been told that the young ladies of Paris were very obliging, but, really, I never should have believed that it went to such an extent. [*He struts about in great self-satisfaction, looking at the portrait.*] She is pretty, this Mademoiselle Rosette! But this box seems quite heavy. [*He opens it.*] Gold pieces! She is charming, this Mademoiselle Rosette! Fortune has not made me wait long in this country. I no sooner arrive than I find a pretty girl and money. [*He flings himself gracefully on the ground and begins to count his gold pieces.*] One, two, three, five . . . the more I think of it, the more agreeable I consider her. Ten, nine, seven. . . . Oh! My heart belongs forever to this Mademoiselle Rosette. [*Meanwhile NERINE arrives, and softly comes up behind him, listening to his talk; he, after*

replacing the money in the case, addresses himself to the portrait.] Yes, charming Rosette, with all my soul will I marry you tomorrow. I will love you, which is more. You have such an engaging way that never . . . [NERINE *tears the box from him with fury.*]

NERINE. Now at last I know you, monster!

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. Good! [*He is naturally surprised, but remains cool. He rises.*]

NERINE. I know my rival. So you prefer Rosette? So it is Rosette you are to wed tomorrow?

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. [*Aside.*] What, my marriage is already known? [*Aloud.*] Yes, Mademoiselle; is that any reason for taking my property?

NERINE. Your property, your property, wretch. . . . I don't know what keeps me from tearing your eyes out. Deceiver! Your property was Nerine's heart, who adored you, who loved you alone, whose happiness depended upon you alone! Ingrate! You scorn it, you count as naught my love, my tears, my despair! Nothing restrains me; it is time to avenge my wrongs. [*She takes him by the throat and shakes him roughly.*] It is time to stifle the sentiment which has restrained me so far. You shall repent having deceived me; you shall lament having injured me; I want to see you at my knees, asking my pardon, weeping, dying with grief, and I shall be all the more inflexible. [*She pushes him against the garden wall, and goes out. He is left with arms outstretched along the wall, in the attitude of his brother earlier in the play.*]

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. Well, she has the box with her! Oh! Hey, Mademoiselle! Oh! Hey! [*He just realizes the possibility of stopping her, and runs across.*] At least give me back the gold. She doesn't listen; let me run after her, and try to get back my money.

What a singular country this is! They give you with one hand, and take back with the other. [*He goes out. ARLEQUIN enters on the other side.*]

ARLEQUIN. Thank heaven, I am free, and I shall no longer have to obey anyone but my dear Rosette. [*He looks at her house.*] Ah, how different is a master from a mistress; it ought not to be called the same thing. . . . Let me knock at her door. [*He knocks.*]

ROSETTE. [*At the window.*] Who is there?

ARLEQUIN. Me!

ROSETTE. What do you want?

ARLEQUIN. [*With offended dignity.*] What a question! The portrait.

ROSETTE. What portrait?

ARLEQUIN. How, what portrait? Yours. Are there two in the world?

ROSETTE. You have it in your pocket.

ARLEQUIN. I have it in my pocket? Who put it there? [*He searches his pocket and begins to have doubts of himself.*]

ROSETTE. You did. I gave it to you not fifteen minutes ago.

ARLEQUIN. You gave it to me?

ROSETTE. Certainly.

ARLEQUIN. To me? [*He is growing bewildered, and his comic uncertainty almost staggers him.*]

ROSETTE. Yourself; have you forgotten it already?

ARLEQUIN. Listen, my love; I am surely wrong, for it is impossible for you not to be right; but we can never come to an understanding a dozen yards from each other; do me the favor to come down, I beg.

ROSETTE. Gladly; but it will not be for long, for it is getting dark. [*She descends.*]

ARLEQUIN. [*Aside.*] What does she mean? I know very well that I have no more memory than a

rabbit; but I never forget when anyone gives me anything.

ROSETTE. [*Appearing.*] Well, here I am. What do you want?

ARLEQUIN. I want my portrait. You promised it to me; you must keep your word.

ROSETTE. But I have kept my word, and you know . . .

ARLEQUIN. Come, come, Mademoiselle Rosette, let us end this jest; I do not like to be teased in such a matter. When people are in love in earnest, it is not for fun.

ROSETTE. What! Seriously, do you mean to insist that I did not give you my portrait? [*ROSETTE does have a temper, and almost proves it now.*]

ARLEQUIN. No, certainly, you did not give it to me; you told me to come and get it before dark, and I haven't seen you since that moment.

ROSETTE. Arlequin?

ARLEQUIN. Well? [*He rubs his toe on the ground, like a pouting child, hating to give in, and determined to hold out as long as possible.*]

ROSETTE. Do you wish to make me angry?

ARLEQUIN. How can you think so? You know that that has been my constant fear.

ROSETTE. Well, my friend, let us put an end to this. Think of what you have so often said to me, that there would never be any quarrelling in our household; would you break your promise the eve before? I have not deserved it. I have done all that I could for you. You wanted my portrait, and I gave it to you with as much pleasure as you took in accepting it. [*Moving back.*] You have it; keep it; let's say no more about it, but good-night. [*She starts to go; ARLEQUIN detains her.*]

ARLEQUIN. [*With clasped hands.*] My dear!

ROSETTE. Well?

ARLEQUIN. Is it possible that love, or the anticipation of your being mine tomorrow, affects my brain? If that is the case, you must pity me for the trouble you have brought upon me. Tell me again, then, for friendship's sake, in kindness, where, when, and how you took so much pleasure in giving me that portrait?

ROSETTE. Here, not a quarter of an hour ago; I was coming back from the artist's. I found you knocking at my door. I . . .

ARLEQUIN. Me? I was knocking at your door?

ROSETTE. Certainly. I gave you the box with the portrait in it; and as you had said that your master refused to pay what he owed you, I put into the box the little money that I had.

ARLEQUIN. What! You put money in the box?

ROSETTE. Yes, my dear. Can it be that you are angry?

ARLEQUIN. Neither angry nor glad. That does not affect the portrait. What next?

ROSETTE. Next? That's all!

ARLEQUIN. [*Sadly. He doubts her, but his love is strong.*] And is all that true?

ROSETTE. [*Excited.*] What! Is it true?

ARLEQUIN. And where did I put that box?

ROSETTE. I left it in your hands. You can't have a plan to break with me, denying all I have just said?

ARLEQUIN. [*Searching his pocket.*] Oh, no, my love! Oh, my God! No! I love you too much not to believe you more than I believe myself. It is strange, that is all.

ROSETTE. [*More excited.*] What! You don't remember?

ARLEQUIN. [*Still searching his pocket.*] Oh, yes, yes, my love, I remember now; I remember perfectly.

Thank you for your kindness, and [*sighing*] for the portrait you gave me; I shall not lose it, that is sure.

ROSETTE. In truth, my dear, I believe your head is a little confused, but that cannot make me angry, and I hope I never shall see you any more sensible. Good-bye, my dear; it is quite dark; I must go in. You won't forget tomorrow, I hope?

ARLEQUIN. Certainly not; and I promise not to keep you waiting. [*She goes into her house. It is dark.*]

ARLEQUIN. It is clear that the devil has a hand in my affairs, and that he is the one who cheated me out of my portrait. Now, as he might very likely cheat me out of my Rosette, I am going to lie down at her door and wait for the happy day, tomorrow. I shall not stir from here. [*He sits down at ROSETTE'S door.*] I shall not close my eyes all night. I am going to guard my sweetheart as I ought to have guarded her portrait, and we shall see who will be the cleverest, the devil or love. [YOUNG ARLEQUIN enters, thinking himself alone.]

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. I couldn't overtake that thief; she surely doesn't know the cruel difficulty in which she has placed me. What will become of me? It is night, and I haven't a sou. If Mademoiselle Rosette does not take pity upon me, I shall have to sleep in the street.

ARLEQUIN. [*Aside.*] I hear Rosette's name.

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. I should like to try a little sere-nade; that will perhaps induce Mademoiselle Rosette to open her door to me. In truth, she can very well give me some supper on the eve of our marriage. Let me see. [*He tunes his guitar.*]

ARLEQUIN. [*Rising.*] What is he saying about marriage?

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. With all that, the thief seemed

rather nice; her anger would have won my heart, if she hadn't taken my gold. Oh, Rosette is better; she gives instead of taking. Well, let me sing her some pretty couplet; when one wants to please and hasn't much love, he must try to have a little wit. [*He tunes his guitar.*]

ARLEQUIN. [*Sharpening his wooden sword on the ground.*] I will tune my guitar, too!

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. [*He sits at the bench and sings.*]

Wilt listen to the lover, true and tender,

Who comes again to sing of all his flame?

Until he clasps thee tight in sweet surrender,

His pain is less the while he sings thy name.

ROSETTE. [*At the window.*] Is that you, my dear?

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. Yes, I.

ARLEQUIN. [*Aside.*] How! She speaks to him!

ROSETTE. I am listening with pleasure.

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. Oh! I can never give you as much as your portrait gave me.

ARLEQUIN. [*Aside.*] Her portrait!

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. [*He sings.*]

Repeatedly I wish to see that treasure.

Its vow of love it never will unsay;

And tho' my heart it fills with deepest pleasure,

My jealous eyes desire it alway.

ARLEQUIN. [*Aside.*] I really feel like tweaking the ears of that songster.

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. [*To ROSETTE.*] What did you say?

ROSETTE. I said nothing, my dear; I am listening.

ARLEQUIN. [*Aside.*] Oh, the deceiver! I shall choke, I believe, if he sings another verse!

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. [*To ROSETTE.*] Did you ask me for another verse? [*He sings.*]

Why wilt thou keep my lips forever telling

The pleasant vow by which my heart is graced?

Look at thyself, Rosette, in charms excelling,
Then know my vow can never be effaced.

ARLEQUIN. [*Aside.*] That rascal will kill me with vexation; but I shall not die without my revenge. [*He beats his brother with his wooden sword.*] This is my music!

ROSETTE. [*At the window.*] Oh, Heavens! Let's hasten to his aid! [*She descends.* YOUNG ARLEQUIN runs off.]

ARLEQUIN. [*Alone.*] I should really like to know how she can excuse herself for all that I have just heard.

ROSETTE. [*She enters, groping her way.*] My dear, where are you? Aren't you wounded? Tell me quickly.

ARLEQUIN. Yes, yes, I am wounded, cruelly wounded. There is that Rosette of whom I was so sure! The eve of her marriage, she betrays her husband. Come, now that I know you, I no longer love you. Oh! I know very well that I shall die for having uttered that word, but I will say it a hundred times in order to die more quickly. I no longer love you, I no longer love you, I no longer love you.

ROSETTE. I beg you to answer me. What can you reproach me for?

ARLEQUIN. Ah! It is only to those who are still esteemed that one makes reproaches, and I have none to make to you. [*He moves away; at that moment NERINE appears.*]

NERINE. [*Aside.*] I hear the voice of my traitor; let's make sure of his perfidy.

ROSETTE. [*She has heard the last words only.*] But what are you saying about perfidy? Arlequin, my dear Arlequin, listen to me! [*Here YOUNG ARLEQUIN, who had fled, returns; hearing the last words of ROSETTE, he goes toward NERINE.*]

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. [*To NERINE, whom he takes for ROSETTE.*] Here I am; may I speak to you?

ARLEQUIN. [*Mistaking his brother's voice for that of ROSETTE.*] You may speak as long as you like; nothing can justify you.

ROSETTE. I am in despair!

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. [*To NERINE, whom he finds still near him.*] Why so, my dear Rosette?

NERINE. [*Aside.*] I have difficulty in controlling my rage.

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. [*To NERINE.*] It is very kind of you to be angry. What happened is of no account; [*with a swagger*] they were five or six against me, otherwise I should have soundly thrashed them.

ROSETTE. [*She hears him.*] Why, where are you?

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. I am here.

ARLEQUIN. [*Aside.*] What do I hear?

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. [*To ROSETTE.*] It's I whom you hear.

ROSETTE. [*Taking his hand.*] Is it you?

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. It is I.

NERINE. [*Seizing him.*] Oh! I have you; you shall not escape me. [*YOUNG ARLEQUIN is between ROSETTE and NERINE.*]

ARLEQUIN. [*Going into ROSETTE's house.*] Let me try to shed some light on this.

ROSETTE. What! You were betraying me?

NERINE. You thought you would deceive me, wretch?

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. Devil take me if I understand a word of what you want! In Heaven's name, Mademoiselle Rosette, don't go away; and you, spirit, devil, invisible elf, don't hold me so tight; I am choking. [*ARLEQUIN brings a light.*]

ARLEQUIN. What! It is my brother from Bergamo!

NERINE. How's this! There are two of them! All the better!

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. [*He runs to embrace his brother.*] Ah! My dear brother, it is you!

ARLEQUIN. My dear fellow, I am very glad to see you, though you don't act like such a very good brother.

ROSETTE. What a resemblance! But my heart is not deceived by it. [*She takes the hand of the elder.*]

ARLEQUIN. Yet it was, for you gave him your portrait.

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. Mademoiselle Nerine knows very well what has become of it. Listen, Mademoiselle, I do not know whether my brother has done you any wrong; but it is certain that I arrived only today. As I was arriving, Mademoiselle Rosette came very civilly and gave me the portrait and some money; the next moment you came and snatched both from me, and disappeared like a flash, reproaching me with being cold to your love, while I would have given all the treasure in the world to have the pleasure of seeing you a moment longer.

ARLEQUIN. According to what he says, Mademoiselle, it seems to me that you might exchange that portrait for the original of mine. [*He points to his brother.*]

NERINE. You have taught me that it is best to be well acquainted before falling in love.

YOUNG ARLEQUIN. Just see my stupid blunder! I began at the end with you. However, you know my brother; that is just the same as if you knew me; you see that I resemble him in every feature. The only difference is that I am the younger, and if you were so kind as to love me, I should think myself the head of the family.

ARLEQUIN. Come, Mademoiselle Nerine; it de-

pend on you alone whether we shall all four of us be happy.

NERINE. Well! I see that I must first give him back his portrait, and then we will see about giving you mine.

ARLEQUIN. My friends, now we are all satisfied. Let us love one another; but, if you can take my word for it, let's not live in the same house; mistakes of more consequence than that of today might happen. [*Joining hands, all four move forward and make a conventional bow.*]

THE CURTAIN FALLS

THE BARE BONES OF IBSEN



IN the February number of **DRAMA** appeared an article by me bemoaning the violence done the playwright by managerial indifference to the nuances of character. Taking as my text Hartley Manners's dictum that character makes situation, I tried to show how the slightest deviation from the creator's conception affects the truth of the consequent action. I might well have said—had I thought of it before—that every such deviation has its quite unsuspected tremendous results as when one tips one's rifle ever so little at one end and finds at the other that it misses the target altogether.

Having thus unbosomed myself concerning the peccadilloes of the regular theatre managers, what is there left for me to say regarding the woeful transgressions of the moving picture director? Not so long ago one jocosely indulged in speculations concerning the possibilities of film productions of Shakespeare. When one wished to score heavily and make the laugh quite uproarious one presaged that cinematic ambition might yet reach out to Ibsen. By now the Shakespearean pictures are a commonplace, and however one misses the poetic diction, there is some compensation in the wealth of scenic display. But now we have the Ibsen picture with no compensating wealth of scenic display, historic costumes and incidences, majestic royalty or exuberant architecture—nothing but the story of the play reduced to its lowest common denominator. And this happens to

the doughty Dane, the disdainful one, the individualist who would rather be right than rich, who so studied his causes and effects that he dreaded the misinterpretation of the average careless stage production. What would be his emotions if he were to see his most popular play, *The Doll's House*, on the screen! I attended the first performance. The effect was precisely what I should have predicted. The situation remains; the character vanishes into thin air. Yet, if I am true to my text that character *makes* situation, it is obvious that the situation cannot *au fond* be quite the same. As another writer says in the same number of DRAMA, "A thousand authors have written plays or novels with forgery as the basic motive of the plot; but it takes an Ibsen to conceive a *Doll's House*." I am tempted to say it takes a producer to conceive the hodge-podge of incidents that is listed on the program as Ibsen's play. Was the target missed altogether, then? Well, the reels did tell of a wife who forged her father's name to a document in order to save the life of her husband. As to the film producer, one might say:

A forging wife, saving her husband's life,
A forging wife was to him
And it was nothing more.

One might add still in Wordsworthian vein:

. . . and Oh!
The difference to ——— Nora!

It may be I am overfond of Nora. I confess she is to me the most lovable of Ibsen's heroines. I like and admire Lona Hessel, but I love Nora. Nora is so impulsive, so natural, so bubbling over with affection; she plays so nicely with her children; she has such a shrewd, humorous view of her husband's little

touches of masculine pose; and she so honestly and wholeheartedly admires him. After seeing Hedda's scarcely veiled contempt for Tesman, it is like a breath of clean, fresh air to watch Nora's pride and faith in her Torvald. And how heartily she greets her old school friend! Again what a contrast to Hedda's shabby treatment of Mrs. Elvsted! There is no pose about Nora; she is sincere all through. Her husband's life simply had to be saved. She simply had to get the money somehow. She tried to get him to borrow the money. She tried pleading, she tried tears, to no avail. She could not tell him how ill he was—that his life was at stake. So she simply had to sign her father's name to the note. It was unfortunate that her father was too ill to sign himself, or to be bothered about Torvald's illness; so, of course, there was nothing else for her to do. Nora is the prototype of Barrie's Lenora—only she is far more convincing. You see it was quite certain that Nora's father would not have objected at all, whereas it is far from certain that the man in the railroad carriage did not object to being thrown out and killed because the baby had a cold!

It is really most interesting to note how many things are shown in the film that were omitted in the play. We see snow on the streets outside; we see the inside of Krogstadt's home; we see his two motherless boys, and we see a delightful picture of Nora's three youngsters making a snowman outside right below the window. We can almost see the director's smug smile of satisfaction at being able to show so many things which build up and heighten the interest of the story. We can also see that never in the world will he be able to understand all he has let go, all that has eluded him, all that to true lovers of Ibsen is of infinitely more preciousness than even the

clever stunt whereby we watch Krogstadt mail the letter and see it actually descend into the letter box of the Helmer home. Alas, and alas, there are a hundred little sayings and doings that are omitted which are more illuminating than even glimpsing on the wall a picture of the very cottage in Italy where Torvald regained his health.

Let us compare the scene where in the play Torvald shows his suspicion of Nora's lack of self control.

In the picture he pounces upon a bag of macaroons and accuses her of having eaten one. Herein clearly the film director proves himself more versed in stagecraft than Ibsen, for is it not the first law of dramaturgy that whatever is actually seen is worth more than that which is merely talked about? When Nora makes her celebrated denial, he opens the bag and peers into it. What could be more lifelike? And yet, how infinitely more expressive is the scene as the master wrote it:

HELMER. But—I say—it strikes me—you look so, so—what shall I call it?—suspicious today—

NORA. Do I?

HELMER. You do, indeed. Look me full in the face.

NORA. [*Looking at him.*] Well?

HELMER. [*Threatening with his finger.*] Hasn't the little sweet tooth been breaking the rules today?

What has happened in the film is that more is *seen* and less is *felt*. There are so many little things that go to make up the real Nora and the real play that it is almost impossible to capture them here and hold them up for review, but at least three, I think, are not too delicate to be haled into court to bear witness. In the play Nora is distinctly proud of having raised that large sum of money and of thus saving her husband's life. She is like a child who wants to prove in the most childish way possible that she is no longer

a child. She darkly warns her old school friend that she is not so "silly" as she is usually thought to be; that she, too, has had her troubles in this weary world. Nothing is clearer than her attitude toward her crime—when Krogstadt accuses her of having signed her father's name, she does not deny it. After a short silence she throws her head back and looks defiantly at him and affirms the truth of his suspicions: "*I wrote father's name there.*" But in the picture she seems overwhelmed with the consciousness of her wrong-doing, and hides her face in her hands! That, of course, may possibly be the fault of Miss Ferguson, but I doubt it. I seem to see the Art Film director telling her to register guilt and confusion!

The second omission, one which gives an important key to Nora's character, is the love scene with Dr. Ranke. In her quick, delicate perception that his love for her has made it impossible for her to seek his help, Nora proves herself a woman of clean instincts and wifely probity. Just think for a moment! Here she is about to be exposed as a common forger by a law which, to her surprise, does not take motives into account. All her brave struggle to pay her obligations, all her self-denial and fibbing (Ah! why did not Ibsen restrict her fibbing to those little white lies that hid her sacrifices!), all her anxieties, all are to prove of no avail. Disgrace will come to her, and worse yet, to her husband, whose career is looking so bright just then—the husband whom she adores. And here is a wealthy man who worships her and is willing to give her anything she wants and no questions asked, a man who probably will ask no other reward than service, for there is no hint anywhere of the leopard's spots, no suggestion of Asessor Brack; and yet the brave little heart instinct-

ively and instantly realizes that his declaration of love puts it out of his power to save her. It may be Nora is weak on the laws of forgery and its punishment, but she is strong on the laws of wifehood. Three cheers for foolish, ignorant, little Nora!

The third serious omission is her voluntary staying away from her children for fear she will corrupt them. What can be more pathetic, more sincere, and more important in its motivation than her horror when Torvald tells her that Krogstadt, by his life of lies and hypocrisy, has been poisoning his children for years. Her abandonment to despair at his statement that children are more easily corrupted by lying mothers than by lying fathers, her tender imploring of the old nurse who has brought her up, to be good also to her children should they be rendered motherless—all this omitted robs the outcome of a large part of its significance.

One other point is of interest in contrasting the picture with the play. Has anyone pointed out how difficult it is to achieve climax on the screen? Dramatic climax must not only be carefully built; it must be swift, suffering no interruption. In the filmed *Doll's House*, the drama of Nora's momentous decision to leave her children and find herself simply melted into thin air through the meticulous detail inserted with great care and verisimilitude by the director. One scarcely takes sudden high resolutions while searching through one's bureau drawers for one's belongings. I caught myself recalling my sceptical reception years ago of those lovely heroines of Maurice Hewlett, who lived so long in woods and glades. I always found myself wondering about the necessary, but unromantic commissary department. In the same way, Nora's departure had always been to me a kind of symbolic leavetaking, which did not

concern itself overmuch with railroads and time tables. To see her gathering her things together as if she were carefully preparing for a visit to her sister-in-law, was anything but helpful in sustaining the note of high resolve! Moreover, there was more than one leavetaking. She kept disappearing and returning, and leaving and coming back until one's patience was quite exhausted. You see it was necessary to get rid of her in order to show a close-up of her husband gnashing his teeth. It was necessary to get him out of the way to show her emptying her bureau drawers. Altogether one of the great moments of dramatic literature was reduced to the interest of packing a handbag and of a final nice silhouette against a door that was architecturally highly effective!

The bare bones of Ibsen, indeed!

ANNIE NATHAN MEYER.

THE COMPLEXION OF OUR DRAMA.



RECENT critic has declared that American dramatists have been losing their own souls in order to gain a mastery of technic; and further insists that no really good play has been produced within our theatres since *The Great Divide*. It would be curious to know just how he puts so supremely high that single play, which moves along fairly well after it starts, but starts with such a terrific jolt. On the opposite side an accomplished actress of as much intelligence as ability asserts that our native dramatists are gaining in power every year; turning their eyes away from the century-old and at times weariedly sophisticated theatre of the old world, they are finding in the familiar life about them the basis of their stories and the color for their characters. Between the critic who makes his living by finding fault and the actress who makes her living by finding rôles for herself, there is not much to choose, but the two opinions fairly represent the difference between the stage and the pen.

Considering a great many factors, there seems to be reason for optimism. This is not only because fewer English plays are coming to us, nor because more and more of our own plays are going to England and were before the war, but because during the past decade fewer and fewer translations from the continental theaters have made runs upon our boards. Recall the long lines of French and German masterpieces in which all our best actors and actresses used to star. Do you believe they could be

revived or duplicated now? No matter what reasons may be assigned for the failure of interest in foreign compositions, is this not the native playwright's golden opportunity? Formerly an imported drama could instantaneously engage a producer's attention; he would always be more likely to risk a reproduction than a new venture.

What is the condition today? Admit to a producer that your manuscript deals with foreigners and, if he deigns to answer at all, he will coldly—or warmly—inform you that he is looking for some strong play of American life with strong characterizations. If you can thaw his managerial incommunicativeness, he may further specify that he wants a play showing the contrast of the raw westerner with the corrupt city, or the reaction of the small town to the returned woman of a past, or a revelation of corrupt politics, now waning in popularity with manager and audience, or some struggle of narrow, plain people in a small town, such as was attempted in *Children of Earth* and in *Erstwhile Susan*, or he wants a comedy of the social climber, or a farce of sharp business practice, or a drama of some social problem, avoiding the too hackneyed use of the eternal triangle. And doubtless, since *Old Lady 31* drew steadily, he will seek for a delineation of middle age or later years.

All the burden of proof rests now with the foreigner; more than ever because of certain recent experiences. As *Caroline*, much heralded and puffed before it appeared, was not nearly so attractive close-to as across the water, she went back home; the comedy didn't have enough *material* behind its clever idea. The same lack forced Mr. Cyril Maude to relinquish *The Basker* and return to *Grumpy*. Another importation, *Such Is Life*, indicated that such was not life by dying at the end of a week's perform-

ances, for lack of nourishment; at one performance there was exactly seven dollars and a half in the house.

Now, then, is the chance for American drama. The threatened "movie" invasion has not swept the spoken drama from the theaters. In most cities the film has to provide its own houses. The attempt to herd everybody into dark holes to squint at a device—wonderful, I grant you, but none the less mechanical, with some of the silliest conventions in the world—has not succeeded entirely. There are some millions of good citizens who recognize no incongruity at all when the heroine opens her lips and no sound issues, yet sit complacently when the report of a pistol shot, or the gallop of a horse, or the splash of a falling body, is reproduced. There will always be room for both. The eight million people in the United States who are in some kind of theater every day will gradually separate to their different interests. There is already an aristocracy of price for screen plays; there may be in that distinction an aid for the audiences of the real drama.

In material essentially American the future of our drama is based. This does not mean the production of "*the* great American play," for that much-discussed, yet never particularized idea, is not likely ever to appear. Our mistake lies in speaking of "an America" when there are "Americas" resembling one another in nothing at all—race, history, climate, locality, tradition, occupation, politics, or aspiration. Even our cities are different: San Francisco will not accept as correct the views of New Orleans; St. Louis will not accept Chicago as a model.

Can one single drama represent us all? It seems extremely unlikely, and it is undesirable. In the welter of the plays that come to the surface only the

best should survive, although it doesn't so much matter whether they survive or not if they inspire other good drama later on.

If all the plays upon the boards do not yet fulfil the demands we may make, there is hope that they soon will. The public has convinced producers that they are interested in their own land; if the recent widespread interest in American historical pageantry did nothing else it proved that. Dramatists are trying to supply a demand. They may not do it all at first, but in many of the plays cited here there are indications and promises which must soon be realized.

Does a setting have to be Paris or Berlin to permit an author to reproduce the counterpart of a play by Bernstein or Wedekind? Might not a native dramatist furnish Mr. Faversham with a play in every way the equal of *Getting Married* or *The Hawk*? Every city will give the author material for plays of dis-soluteness. Can he not find among originals here humorous types to surpass most of the characters of the knock-about and low-class Irish plays? Haven't our own racy sons and daughters of the soil tongues as quick and characters as expansive? Are there not in our rural districts fancies as rich, as susceptible to natural witchery as any Italian or Spanish? Our early days *must* be able to deliver up tragedies as stark and unrelenting as Masefield's *Tragedy of Nan*. Every day experience must produce figures as dramatic as those of *Hindle Wakes*. There is no need to go to Russia with Tolstoi and Gorky while the mill towns of east and south, and coal districts of east and middle west blot out lives that have a natural right to live, or worse still, crush the hearts that want to be happy. Not only in France is "business business"; not only under French laws

are there comic situations in marriage to produce a *Divorçons*. Mr. George Bernard Shaw and Mr. Izrael Zangwill may go to the present or back to early days in England to pull the mask from hypocrisy in matters of faith, but the native American creator need go no further than his own town to gather his characters and weave his threads of comedy or seriousness around insincere religion.

Our playwrights must have learned their technic now, that skill in shaping their material so that they can with it secure any effect they will. Like children with piano exercises they have practiced all the devices made sure by experienced workers abroad; they are themselves sure of touch; they have even succeeded in that extremely difficult piece of stage business, in making a man walk into a scene as a gentleman and not as an intruder, and having brought him into the scene; they know what to do with him, and how to do it.

The certainty of the Greeks in all they did is usually explained as knowing what they wanted to do, and knowing exactly how to do it. The experimenting dramatist sometimes knows what he wants to do but does not know how to do it the best way; a second man knows how to produce all the effects, but has no real idea of what he actually wants to say. This results in the device of the author who, conscientiously anxious to point some good acting in a play by a contrast, finds his technic unequal to doing it naturally, and is forced, or feels himself forced to drag in an overdrawn, impossible stock Irish character woman, as is done in *The Unchastened Woman*. The author of *The Man Who Came Back*, not being sufficiently skilful to depict the young hero's degradation surely enough for his spectators, shows not only an opium den, but has the young fellow relate

how he was kicked out of a chink's saloon, lets him pawn his college fraternity pin for drink, and then almost strangle the woman who has followed him out to the east to reclaim him. This indicates the desire for strong, crude effects by the well-intentioned playwright who is not adroit or confident enough to get a certain effect by more nearly natural, less startling methods. Such details produce the unhealthy looking excrescences on an otherwise healthy, strong-looking complexion; they are little annoyances to be disposed of as rapidly and harmlessly as possible. They do not prove any deep seated derangement; they merely interfere with the pleasurable contemplation of a thing of perfect structure, smooth lines, harmonious development, such as a good drama should be.

As such protuberances on a play are pruned away, will the effectiveness of the drama not suffer?

This brings us to the second consideration concerning our drama. It must depend less and less on ingenuity of plot, on novelty of story,—because, remember, there are only a few possible stories for plays—on suddenness of change, and rely more and more on the more difficult yet much more lasting aspect of a play, its characterization. This, too, is the *actor's* great chance. To enact a plot may require no especial ability;—the rapidity of incident, the tenseness of situations may carry the audience along. And as Mr. George Arliss says, “The only thing is to know how to do all the tricks without being found out.” A good actor will desire the more difficult acting part, he will welcome the chance to make a character live. A few do live on the American stage,—two alone will prove what I mean, Joseph Jefferson's Rip Van Winkle and Mr. Warfield's The Music Master. Do you suppose that anybody goes

now to see this second play? Not at all; the entire audience goes to see a character. Whenever the attempt was made to create another character part for this actor it failed, last of all most signally in the undramatic rôle of Von der Decken, the Flying Dutchman.

In characters or attempts at characters our drama is especially rich just now. One was attempted for Mr. Arliss in *Paganini*,—it has long since been buried. Another was being carted around by Mr. Skinner as one Mister Antonio, who was kept alive for a considerable time by the invigorating power of the actor, although most of us will always associate Mr. Skinner with the audacious beggar of *Kismet*. Miss Adams can hardly live down *Peter Pan*. Illustrations of this marvelous vitality of a purely fictitious creation show how lasting any dramatic character may be, and prove also that a part does not die when it passes from the boards even in repertory.

To imagine and to act such characters demands observation of all the details of life among us; a skill at seizing the little things that point to big changes in character and disposition; and a sincere attempt to reproduce the thing, the quality, the essence we, for need of a more exact word, call our American psychology. So you see, we are round to the place we started from,—the need and chance for our drama to spring from our own soil, to be saturated with our own ideas, to give expression to our many and varied selves.

CLARENCE STRATTON.

THE LIGHT-BEARER*

A SYMBOLIC DRAMA IN ONE SCENE

By

TAPANMOHAN CHATTERJI

[*The scene is a very dark room inside which a number of persons are seated.*]

THE FIRST MAN. How many days have passed, I wonder? [*Addressing the second.*] Do you know?

THE SECOND MAN. No, I don't. It's no use knowing time.

THE FIRST MAN. It's quite true. But did you hear anything about . . .

THE SECOND MAN. [*Attentively.*] About what?

THE FIRST MAN. Oh, it's only a rumor! But it's terrible. . . . Ha! why does the room shake? . . .

THE SECOND MAN. Shake? Does it? . . . No, I believe it doesn't.

THE FIRST MAN. Then it's a queer fancy of my mind.

THE SECOND MAN. I am sure it is. But what about the rumor you have been speaking of?

THE FIRST MAN. Oh, yes! That rumor! But I can't tell you that. I don't know it well myself. It's all dim and hazy in my mind.

THE SECOND MAN. What is it about? Tell us whatever you know of it.

*Translated by the author from his original in Bengali. Copyright, 1918; permission to act may be obtained from the author or THE DRAMA.

THE FIRST MAN. It may be all false. [*Suddenly frightened.*] Do you hear a scream?

THE SECOND MAN. No, not I. No voice has reached my ears.

THE THIRD MAN. Something must be wrong with him. I've never heard him talk like this before.

THE FOURTH MAN [*addressing the first*]. What has happened to you?

THE FIRST MAN. Oh! Nothing particular; only my mind is not at ease.

THE SECOND MAN. That we can see quite well. But you don't say anything.

THE FIRST MAN. Say what?

THE SECOND MAN. About a certain rumor of which you have been talking . . .

THE FIRST MAN. Ah, yes! It was long ago. How many days have passed since then? Well, it was long ago since he went out of this Room of Darkness.

THE SECOND MAN. Went out! And of this Room of Darkness! Who was it that went out?

THE FIRST MAN. Ah! That I don't know exactly. I can't remember it. It was one of us, I am sure. But maybe it's only my fancy. Pray, don't ask me anything. I shan't be able to tell you anything more. [*After a pause.*] But you may go and ask the oldest among us. He may be able to tell you something.

THE SECOND MAN. Exactly. Let us ask him. [*Addressing the third.*] You go and ask him, will you?

THE THIRD MAN. No, no. It is proper that you should go.

THE SECOND MAN. There's nothing much to say. You have only to ask him if the rumor is true that a certain person among us—went out of this Room of Darkness?

THE THIRD MAN. It's better that you should ask him that.

THE SECOND MAN. Well, if you are so persistent I will go and ask him. [*Moving about a little to one side.*] Are you there, my old friend? Do you hear me?

THE OLDEST MAN. Yes! Here I am.

THE SECOND MAN. I say, do you know anything about a certain rumor?

THE OLDEST MAN. A rumor! What's that?

THE SECOND MAN. That a certain man among us . . .

THE OLDEST MAN. Yes!

THE SECOND MAN. Long ago . . .

THE OLDEST MAN. Long ago!

THE SECOND MAN. Went out of this place . . .

THE OLDEST MAN. Went out of this place! [*After some thought.*] Well, who has told you that?

THE SECOND MAN [*touching the first, who has followed him*]. It's he.

THE FIRST MAN. No, no. . . . It's a fancy. . . . It's false . . .

THE OLDEST MAN. No. It's not false. It's not a fancy. It is true.

THE SECOND MAN. True!

THE OTHERS. True!

THE OLDEST MAN. Yes, quite true.

THE SECOND MAN. How is that?

THE OLDEST MAN. Listen to me, then. I will tell you everything. I have been thinking of telling you this long before. A man who lived here actually went out of this Room of Darkness.

THE SECOND MAN. But why? Why did he go out?

THE OLDEST MAN. To fetch light.

THE SECOND MAN. What! To fetch light?

THE OTHERS. Light?

THE OLDEST MAN. Yes, light.

THE SECOND MAN. But didn't he know that it was forbidden to bring any light here? Light brings disaster on our God.

THE OLDEST MAN. He knew that well enough. But he said we would not live without light.

THE SECOND MAN. How silly! Are we not living till now in this Room of Darkness?

THE OLDEST MAN. He called this living in darkness, death.

THE SECOND MAN. Death, indeed! So we have been dead for a long time, and what about our God of Darkness? Is he dead also?

THE OLDEST MAN. That's what he said.

THE SECOND MAN. Did he say that? And by what right, pray? How could he call this living God of ours whose voice we hear in our hearts?

THE OLDEST MAN. He also said that ours was a false God.

THE SECOND MAN. How wicked!

THE OLDEST MAN. That was exactly what I said when he uttered those words.

THE SECOND MAN. And what was his reply?

THE OLDEST MAN. He said his God had told him in a dream that our God of Darkness was a false God and that he should bring light to show us that our God is only a name.

THE SECOND MAN. Then he didn't care for our God?

THE OLDEST MAN. No. He said his God of Light, his God of Fire, was not the same as our God of Darkness.

THE SECOND MAN. But did you all believe him in his words?

THE OLDEST MAN. No, we didn't; I can assure you of that.

THE SECOND MAN. Then why did you let him go out?

THE OLDEST MAN. We didn't let him go out. We did not know when he went away. Only I know he is not here.

THE FIRST MAN [*with a faltering voice*]. I had a dream last night, . . . and I saw . . . I saw three times . . .

THE SECOND MAN. What saw you in your dream?

THE FIRST MAN. I saw that this man had come back with light and had been breaking down the door of this Room of Darkness.

[*A pause ensues.*]

THE SECOND MAN. Oh! It was only a dream!

[*A severe knock comes at the door.*]

MEN OF THE DARK ROOM. Ha! What's that? Who's there?

A VOICE FROM THE OUTSIDE. Open the door. Open the door to me.

THE SECOND MAN. Who are you? What do you want here?

THE VOICE. I am one of you. I have brought light for you.

MEN OF THE DARK ROOM. Light! Oh, how terrible!

THE SECOND MAN. Nobody wants light here. You go away; we don't know you.

THE OTHERS. No, we don't know you. Go away.

THE OLDEST MAN. But I think I know the voice. It's he.

THE SECOND MAN. Whoever it may be, we can't open the door to him; we know that light will bring misfortune on us.

THE VOICE. Ah! Open the door. Don't keep me waiting.

THE SECOND MAN. We won't open it.

THE OTHERS. No, we won't open it.

THE VOICE. Don't dishonor my God.

THE SECOND MAN. We don't know your God.

THE VOICE. Mine is the God of Light and Fire.

THE SECOND MAN. Bless us, Oh Great Lord of Darkness!

THE VOICE. But it is a God of dust closed with the lies of ages. It will vanish before my God. [*A profound silence prevails.*] Come, open the door, I say; else light will force its way into your dark room.

[*A pause follows.*]

THE SECOND MAN. [*To the others in a whisper.*] Look here, my friends, should we open the door to this man who brings light? We, the servants of our God . . .

THE OTHERS. No, we shouldn't; we shouldn't.

THE SECOND MAN [*in a raised voice*]. Do you hear? The door will stick fast!

THE FIRST MAN. Ha!

[*The door breaks down with a crash. A flood of light enters the Dark Room. A man comes in.*]

MEN OF THE DARK ROOM [*covering their faces with their hands*]. Oh! What a disaster!

THE NEWCOMER. No, it's no disaster. It's Life!

THE SECOND MAN. Oh, mighty God of our fathers! Help us from this intruder.

THE NEWCOMER. He will not speak. The light of my God has killed him.

THE OTHERS. Forsooth, we don't hear our God's voice.

THE NEWCOMER. How can you hear his voice when he is not?

THE SECOND MAN. I can't believe that.

THE NEWCOMER. But it is true.

THE SECOND MAN. Speak, oh you Dark God, before whom the enemies fly! [*after some time*].

Speak, oh you God of our fathers, whom we have worshipped so long! [*despairingly*]. Ha, he won't speak! [*with a cry*]. He has deserted us!

THE OTHERS. What a catastrophe! What's to be done now?

THE NEWCOMER. Never fear. Open your eyes and see my God, in whom there is no darkness.

MEN OF THE DARK ROOM [*slowly opening their eyes*]. Ah! How terribly beautiful.

THE OLDEST MAN. We will serve this bright God of Light.

THE NEWCOMER. He will never forsake you.

THE END

THE HANDS THAT STEER



IN every line of human endeavor there are classes of men who, essential though they may be to the finished product of their art, are never known to the public: it is so in the theatre. The producer always "presents" so-and-so in something; the author's name is on every billboard and every program; the actor is seen and heard by the audience and is a by-word in every household. But the director and the stage manager, as well as the master electrician and the scenic artist and the interior decorator, are rarely thought of. The latter, however, are of as much significance to the production of a pleasurable entertainment as the playwright or the actor; and frequently, but for the genius of the director, an otherwise good play would be unsuccessful.

Ordinarily one speaks of a stage director or a stage manager indiscriminately, as if the terms were synonymous. As a matter of fact, their fields are separate, and generally a distinct line of demarcation points off their respective powers and duties. Occasionally, of course, there is an over-lapping of function, as in all professions. Perhaps the best distinction I have ever heard was one Mr. Stuart Walker once gave me, to the effect that, "The director has a general, and the stage manager a current supervision over details." Here as elsewhere, however, the distinction is meaningless to one who is unacquainted with the details. A comparison would be that of an architect to the director and a

draughtsman to the manager. For it is the director who is the artist originally to conceive the picture; it is the stage manager who copies the picture for each performance.

From the time the manuscript is sold to the producer by the author, the director's task has begun. If the director is also the producer, it begins even before that time, in the very selecting of the play. After reading the play he confers with the producer and a cast is selected and engaged. Immediately, the director does two things. First, he calls a rehearsal, whether the actors have seen the play or not; and second, he calls a conference with the author, the scenic artist, and perhaps the producer. In this conference, the plans for the "set" are discussed. The artist and the director plan their effects with the co-operation of the playwright, and when they have come to a conclusion the artist is told to commence work on his model. When completed, the model is brought forth. It is a miniature representation of the stage, as it is to be when the play is produced. Gradually, in the light of rehearsals, the model is changed until it is satisfactory and has been approved artistically by the director and financially by the producer. It is then that the artist and the carpenter begin work on the real scenery.

Meanwhile the director is tearing his hair or breaking pencils or throwing books or doing whatever his temperament in particular suggests to offset the agonies of rehearsals. Or if he is the other sort, he merely makes a suave, ironic remark which, though biting, leaves no mark. Gradually the play develops; the director changes a line here and a whole speech there, if necessary, or a bit of stage business in another place, until out of the original manuscript an acting play evolves.

If the playwright is fortunate, he has only a few lines and speeches changed. Sometimes, however, whole scenes have to be cut or padded, dull passages have to be livened with humor. Sometimes the entire play has to be re-written. Some producers, notably Mr. Belasco, care for little more than the germ of the author's plot, relying either on themselves or on one of their skillful assistants to make a play out of the idea. If the director does not do this himself, he must at least supervise it and outline the general tendency. Directors are after but one thing—effect. And the only way of working out the effect is by the rehearsal. The responsibility is the director's.

This process is not necessarily good; frequently it is very bad, unless perhaps from the box-office point of view. Nevertheless, the director usually has the upper hand on the young author. In the case of better known playwrights, the direction may be done by the author himself. Some few claim prestige enough to be able, as does Charles Rann Kennedy, to say, "Not a line, nor a word, shall be changed!" This, however, is the exception.

When the scenery is completed, it is set up on the stage, and one of the biggest tasks of the director is before him, lighting. On an incorrectly lighted stage, the best of acting can hardly save a play from mediocrity. And frequently the whole dramatic action hangs upon effective use of lights. Such remarkable effects as were produced some years ago in *The Return of Peter Grimm* and last year in *The 13th Chair* were due in a preponderating degree to manipulation of ambers and blues and the skillful use of the switchboard. It is the task of the director to draw up what is called the lighting plot. He diagrams, with the aid of the master electrician, the position of the lights as he thinks they should be

arranged. The theoretical arrangement is tried out. It is changed here and there, little by little, until the scenery is made effective and the expressions on the actors' faces are correctly emphasized. Very often, however, a play will have what are known as stock scenes. For example, there will be a drawing room lighted by windows on one side of the room, and the time, perhaps noon of a summer's day; and the next scene may be at night in the same room, with the lighting from a chandelier and a table lamp. These scenes, and others like them, have been done so often that every stage director and manager knows at once what lights to use with a given scenery set. In such cases the director may allow the manager to draw up the original lighting plot. If it does not satisfy during a rehearsal, it will be changed. But unless the manager is an experienced and particularly capable one the director will not trust him with even a simple lighting arrangement—for it is a ticklish business.

There are yet two matters to be attended to by the director. First, he has to arrange for his properties and his wardrobe; second, he has to decorate his scenes. If the play is one which depends mainly upon its action and dialogue, the director again may allow the manager to draw up the property plot. But if there is a special significance to the properties he will attend to them personally, often going to great lengths to find the proper thing. If the room is a doctor's office, as in *The Boomerang*, a physician or a medical supply house will be consulted. If the scene is Oriental, an Egyptologist will be retained to advise. For in the modern realistic theatre, the director must be certain that his properties are correct as well as effective. If the story is one of Victorian England, the costumes must be Victorian and

not Edwardian or Elizabethan; for never before have audiences been so well-informed and hence so critical as today. The scenes, too, must be correctly decorated with curtains and furniture befitting the age and class of society represented in the play. This matter a good director usually leaves to a professional decorator; for the modern director, as all artists, knows his own limitations and respects specialization. Such scenes as those in last year's farce, *Parlor, Bedroom and Bath*, are typical examples of what an interior decorator can do for a play.

The decorating complete, the director's work is almost over. The play is tried out at Atlantic City or New Haven and its defects are noted. The director rehearses another week, patches up bad places, and the play travels on to New York or Chicago or Boston. If it "goes" at all, the director works hard for a few nights, perfects the play, and after the first week perhaps, leaves it in the hands of the stage manager, and goes his way to a new play.

We have, so far, regarded the work of the director of what is popularly known as "straight drama"; that is, everything from tragedy to farce. We have room here for but a suggestion of the director's task in musical comedy. The musical show, or revue, of course does not attempt realism. The task of training the principals in their speech and action is, then, simpler. But he has many troubles. The scenery is much more elaborate and fantastic; there are, instead of seven or eight costumes, sixty or seventy, necessitating not only a designer but also a wardrobe mistress; the lights do not have to be realistic, but they do have to be effective, and frequently much more elaborate than in comedy. The chorus has to be trained in its dances, the principals have to be taught a different step for each encore, the stage

must be arranged to allow the entire cast on for the finale and yet look like something other than a mob scene. The list is endless.

Whether a director is putting on a comic opera or a farce, when the play is at last in the theatre and well started, the stage manager must relieve him. At random, one might say that on this basis the stage manager's life should be easy, when he has merely to reproduce the work of the director. It is far from that, however, what with a cast to keep in shape, the stage hands to supervise, and possibly his own acting to look after.

During the first rehearsals there is little for the stage manager to do but to perfect his own lines and action, if he is taking a part also, unless the director delegates to him the drawing up of the property plot or the lighting plot. Usually his work does not begin until the scenery is ready. Then it is that he must drill the stage hands in their duties. Each piece of scenery has its own place by the wall when not in use, and the pieces must be put away in a particular order. Not only this, but each hand has a certain sector of the set to put up. The stage manager must see to it that the sets can be changed quickly, quietly, and without disorder, and also that there is a maximum saving of room behind the scenes for the movement of the hands and the cast. These items are important especially in musical comedy, where scenes are changed in less than one minute in utter darkness, and where there is a big cast about the stage. There is no trick to it any more than to pole vaulting; but it requires practice and drill and patient teaching by the manager. A striking example of good system was in last year's *Mr. Antonio*. The first scene represents a saloon with a bar and other fixtures. The next scene shows a street with two houses up stage.

From the audience it seems like a tremendous change, for the houses are not "back drop" houses, but are "built." That is, instead of being merely painted on a drop, they are constructed so that people can go in and come out of them. But the change is an illusion. Far from being a hard change, it is one of the simplest I have ever seen. What is done is as follows: The bar is on rollers and the entire equipment, from the rail at the front to the mirror and the bottles of gin at the back, is rolled back stage. The back drop, which was the rear of the saloon, is pulled to the ceiling. The two side flats are hauled back stage. The houses are already in place. All that has to be done is to lay the steps in front of one house and a grass carpet for the lawns. The two houses, a tremendous piece of scenery, are never touched from the time the play opens until it moves to another city.

The manager has also to perfect himself in the understanding of the properties and lighting. He must know exactly where every light is during every minute of the performance, and the electrician is responsible to him for carrying out the plot to the last detail. And having taught the property man his duties, the stage manager must see to it that the properties are always at hand when they are needed. Stage manager after stage manager has impressed upon me the fact that property men cannot be trusted—some of them going so far as to forget such properties as the fan in Wilde's famous play.

There are many other simple matters a stage manager has to attend to which are, nevertheless, of the utmost importance. Such a matter is the ringing for the rise and fall of the curtain. Plays, like railways, must run on schedule. The audience must get to its restaurant or to its suburban trains by an

early hour. The stage manager tells the electrician when to light his stage and when to shut off the house lights; he signals the curtain man when to draw the curtain. In the meantime, he must see to it that the actors are in place ready to go on at once. He must also ring the curtain for the end of the acts and for the encores, unless he himself is on the stage, in which case he must have his assistant trained to do it. The matter of calling a curtain for the close of an act is very important, for a lost second or an anticipation of the last word will ruin the entire scene. The curtain has a tremendous psychological effect on the audience which cannot be overrated.

Among the greatest worries of the manager is the cast. Frequently a jesting remark by an actor may so enrage another, or worse yet, an actress, that the stage manager will have to step in and take control. Or someone may "steal a scene," or do one of the other thousand things which are professionally taboo. The manager must, as one put it, "use the soft soap." One of the hands may be drunk and need discipline. Quiet must always be preserved back stage at all costs. Very recently I was back stage during a big love scene. The lovers were alone on the stage; he had just told her of his passion; they were silently gazing at each other. Behind the scenes someone was telling a joke; one of the actresses snickered—and the scene was killed. After the curtain, the star (who happened to be his own director) gave the stage manager one of the most violent and indignant lectures I have ever heard, despite the fact that the manager was on the opposite side of the stage from the guilty parties, waiting to ring the curtain. He was responsible for the stage!

In a nutshell, the stage manager must see to it that the play runs smoothly and successfully at every

performance. When he is not actually on the stage himself, he must watch from the wings and note any faults either in the acting or in the mechanical devices. If such a small thing as one word is substituted for another, or a line missed, the manager must call attention to it. The natural tendency, after a few weeks, is to slacken up in tension, to become apathetic. To offset this the manager watches every performance, and if he is not acting, even goes into the audience once a week or so to get the proper perspective. Mr. Morosco, for instance, insists that his managers become one of the audience at least once a week. If the scene goes badly, the manager will call a rehearsal, and, if necessary, a dozen, to perfect it. And if after all his attempts there is still something wrong, he will send for a director to take a hand.

The slacking down of acting is more usual in musical comedy than in other plays. The chorus becomes mechanical and stilted. It is the custom, therefore, in musical shows, to rehearse every Monday. Under an exceptional manager, a show may improve, rather than deteriorate, during performances, even in long runs.

And with all the duties enumerated above, most stage managers have parts to act. Usually, however, respect for the responsibilities of a manager causes the producers to refrain from burdening him with a large part. But some of the stage managers play really important parts, as for instance, Mr. Scott recently in *Mr. Antonio* and Mr. Wagner in *The 13th Chair*. Some stars—notably Mrs. Fiske, Mr. Faverham and Miss Anglin—are their own directors and advising managers. If, however, the managers do not act, their task is great; for the stage manager and his assistants must be ready to go on at a mo-

ment's notice in place of any male member of the cast. Most managers understudy at least four parts, and many are responsible for as many as seven—a like number being worked up by the assistant.

During his spare time in the mornings toward the close of an engagement, the manager has the task of directing the players who are to go on the road. The second or third company has to be coached much harder than the original cast, for in spite of the fact that they are second class players, they are supposed to do as well.

Stage managing and directing are unlike most of the professions we know. There is no school like the law school or the college of medicine which an ambitious youth can attend. The only school is the college of the theatre, in which he must get his training. Practically every stage manager in the country started as an actor, and most are still actors. There are those directors who, like Mr. Walker, are college men, but there are many more whose only "higher education" is of the stage.

The directors and managers have to keep up, not only with the theatre, but, if they are to succeed or even exist, with the outside world as well, just as men in every other profession must keep abreast of the times. For the theatre is a developing institution, never static, and its leaders must here as everywhere be the men who make for world progress.

LEE ETTELSON.

A TWICE-TOLD TALE

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

By

ANNA CANTRELL LAWS

CHARACTERS

MARY CRESWELL

MRS. CRESWELL, her mother

EFFIE CRESWELL, her cousin

ROBERT HURST

[*The scene is the living room of the Creswell family, one of a thousand of the shabby-genteel in a large city.*

On one side of the room there is a large bay-window looking out upon the street. In the middle of the back wall there is a double doorway leading into a hall, which runs parallel with the room and presumably brings the front door of the house on a line with the bay-window. A red plush curtain considerably the worse for wear, hangs in the doorway. The other side of the room has a door which leads to the back rooms, and a window opening on a narrow yard.

The furniture is old and shabby, although of good quality. A large flat-topped desk stands in a position to allow the light from the window to fall

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THE DRAMA.

upon it. In the center of the room there is a substantial library table covered with magazines and newspapers in neat piles. Between it and the bay-window there is a lounge. The other furniture consists of a bookcase, chairs, and the like.

When the curtain rises MARY is sitting at the desk adding up accounts. She is a nice looking young woman about thirty, shabbily, almost dowdily dressed. MRS. CRESWELL is sitting near the table. She is about fifty-five, and has a sweet, refined face. In her lap there is a bag of fancy work. She closes the book she has been reading, lays it down and takes some lace work out of the bag.]

MRS. CRESWELL. I have finished the book, Mary. MARY [*looking up*]. How do you like it?

MRS. CRESWELL. Very much. Effie told me not to read it because it was written thirty years ago and was not true to life. But I guess I'm old fashioned.

MARY. So am I. That book is like a fresh salt breeze.

MRS. CRESWELL. I don't want books to be true to life. I wish life was like the books of my girlhood.

MARY. Where the good girl marries the curate?

MRS. CRESWELL. Yes. Or the hero is not already attached. Wouldn't it be nice if Robert Hurst wasn't married?

MARY. Or if his wife would conveniently die?

MRS. CRESWELL. Oh, Mary! That sounded almost like a wish.

MARY [*rather bitterly*]. Don't worry, Mother. You can't wish death on a person. The days of witchcraft are over. [*She pauses.*] Mother, I'm not mistaken, am I? You think he really cares?

MRS. CRESWELL. I know he cares a great deal.

MARY. When he began calling me "Comrade," I was sure of it, but in a few days you and Effie had nicknames, too.

MRS. CRESWELL. That was one of his wise afterthoughts. Robert Hurst is a man of the world. He is paying you the highest compliment. If he singled you out—and you allowed it—there would be some reflection on you.

MARY. I suppose there would be.

MRS. CRESWELL. When a man visits a household of women regularly, you can rest assured there is an attraction. Mr. Hurst does not come for an old woman like me, or a light young girl like Effie.

MARY. Of course, he does not come to see Effie. All the same I would not call her *light*.

[*There is a silence during which MARY returns to her accounts and MRS. CRESWELL to her lace work and EFFIE enters. She is a young woman about twenty-four, very smartly though simply dressed. She wears a tailor-made suit of good material and perfect fit, a white silk blouse with high collar, neat boots, immaculate gloves, an expensive feather boa, a hat trimmed only with a bird-of-paradise, and a chic veil. In one hand she carries a good-looking hand-bag.*]

EFFIE. Auntie, there is something sputtering out in the kitchen. Shall I see what it is?

MRS. CRESWELL. No. The beets are boiling over. I must change the water. [*She goes out.*]

MARY. Are you going out *again*, Effie?

EFFIE. From the accent on *again*, I suppose you want something done. What is it?

MARY. Could you help Mother get dinner? I have so much to do here.

EFFIE. To be sure I'll help Auntie. But it is early. There is plenty of time for my short errand.

And I would like to glance over the *Times*. [*She searches among the papers and magazines on the table.*] MARY, have you seen the paper?

MARY. No! I have been too busy. I am trying to straighten out our finances.

EFFIE [*finding the paper*]. Here it is. [*She takes the paper, goes over and seats herself by the bay-window and begins to read. Then laying it in her lap, she turns with interest to MARY.*] How are the finances coming out?

MARY. Splendidly. I can pay the doctor, the druggist and the grocer in full, and partly pay the dentist. I think that will leave enough for the coal and perhaps a pair of cheap blankets for Mother's bed.

EFFIE [*excitedly*]. Mary, you can't possibly do all that. I didn't promise to pay *all*. I told you just what I thought I could afford.

MARY. That is all I am counting on. But Mother and I made considerable this month, and I got some money in another way.

EFFIE. How?

MARY. I sold my brooch.

EFFIE. Not your heirloom?

MARY. Yes, Mrs. Hollingsworth came in yesterday to order a lace collar and she admired the pin so much that I asked her what she would give me for it. She made a generous offer and I closed the bargain. My heart is almost broken though.

EFFIE. Mary, why didn't you give me the refusal of that brooch? You knew I always wanted it.

MARY. My price for that brooch was a C. O. D. price. I wanted the money now and in a lump sum—not in driblets in the future.

EFFIE. In the matter of keeping such a beautiful heirloom in the family, both of us ought to have made

sacrifices. I know I would have gone without many things—and you should have been willing to wait for the money.

MARY. Effie, I would be giving you the pin. You never could have paid. Think how much you owe now for board.

EFFIE. I don't think it is very nice in you to keep harping on that debt. I don't eat any more than a wood-pecker. And I keep my own room in order, and help with the sewing and the dishes after dinner and—

MARY. That doesn't pay the butcher and baker and candlestick maker.

[MARY returns to her accounts and EFFIE reads the paper.]

EFFIE [*suddenly*]. Couldn't you put the doctor off?

MARY. No indeed, he must be paid first of all. I was just saying to myself that he had filled the double rôle of physician and patient.

EFFIE. Patient! Oh, I see. [*There is a pause.*] Well, as long as you *have* sold your brooch and we are so rich, don't make arrangements to pay everything out just yet.

MARY. We are not so rich and it is not "just yet." The bills have been standing a good while.

EFFIE. Well, the doctor's can stand a little while longer. It's partly my bill, anyhow. There is something I must have, something necessary to my health, some wearing apparel.

MARY [*indignantly*]. You shall not buy another stitch of clothes. You have already fitted yourself out—shoes, hat—and look at the suit you have on—brand new, and not even paid for.

EFFIE. Well, the trimming on the hat is old, and it is the trimming that costs.

MARY. You bought it in the spring and paid nearly the brooch's ransom for it.

EFFIE. Mary, listen like a sensible woman. When I leave the car at Fourteenth Street, I have a long hill to climb and I am chilled to the bone before I get to the schoolhouse. Then at recess, the teachers must go out into the halls to keep the children in line. We are really inviting colds. Talk about facing the realities of life!

MARY [*relieved*]. Oh, is that all? Why did you make a mountain out of a mole-hill? Mother will knit you a hug-me-tight and I will make you a scarf.

EFFIE. You expect a professional woman to wear a hug-me-tight? It is a pity that you cannot go out into the world and see for yourself what one can and cannot do. A person of my standing does not wear hug-me-tights. I need a set of furs.

MARY. Furs!

EFFIE. Yes. We are going to have an early winter. People are beginning to put their furs on now.

MARY. They never took them off. They wore furs all summer.

EFFIE. It is astonishing how cheap furs are this season. I stepped into Blinn's yesterday—to get an idea of prices. There was one set for sixty dollars and another for seventy-five, and another—

MARY. Cheap?

[MARY *disgustedly* returns to her accounts and EFFIE picks up the paper. She reads for a minute, puts the paper down and thinks awhile, then turns to MARY.]

EFFIE [*rather shamefacedly*]. Well, they are bought.

MARY. What?

EFFIE. The furs. I believe you knew it. I wore them home this morning.

MARY [*tartly*]. I did not see you come in.

EFFIE [*rising*]. Well, you might as well know it, first as last. I'll get them. [*She goes out.*]

MARY [*rising in consternation and calling*]. Mother! Mother!

[*MRS. CRESWELL enters.*]

MRS. CRESWELL. What is it?

MARY. Effie has bought a set of furs!

MRS. CRESWELL. Bought a set of furs! Where did she get the money?

MARY. I think she took the money she promised to us for her board.

MRS. CRESWELL. She had no right to do it.

MARY. She has engaged to pay the tailor twenty dollars a month for the suit that is on her back. She will never be able to give us anything.

[*EFFIE comes in again. There is a scarf flung jauntily over her shoulders and she swings a muff. The furs are dark and handsome but not showy.*]

MRS. CRESWELL [*severely*]. Effie, you have new furs?

EFFIE. Yes, aren't they pretty?

MARY. Effie, you should not have bought them.

EFFIE. I had to. Your friend, Mrs. Hollingsworth, gave me a lift in her machine this morning and I nearly froze. I knew that if I took many such rides, the doctor's bill would be six times what it is.

MARY. Many such rides! When were you in a motor before? If you bought the furs on any such supposition, you must have a wonderful imagination.

EFFIE. Oh, Mary! Stop splitting hairs. It makes no difference whether I ride in a motor or a street car. In either event, I must be protected from the elements. You forget that I go out every day.

MARY [*suspiciously*]. Effie, did you get the cheaper furs?

EFFIE. Well—er—yes and no. I bought the sixty dollar set first and wore them out of the store. But when I saw myself in the shop windows! I looked like a frump. I marched myself back and exchanged them. I couldn't wear those big, fluffy things. They weren't ladylike. Now don't look so severe.

MRS. CRESWELL. What did you pay? They are very handsome.

EFFIE. Well—er—the seventy-five dollar set had been sold. That's what I got for not buying it on sight. This set was a little dearer.

MARY. Why don't you answer Mother's question?

EFFIE [*airily*]. Just give me time. I paid a hundred and twenty-five dollars, but only fifty down. I am going to finish in monthly installments.

MARY. In the meanwhile, what about the doctor? And what about us?

EFFIE. The doctor can wait. He has had so much practice in the art, that he must be letter perfect by this time. And we can scratch along somehow. Mary, don't let's say any more about it. The deed's done. [*With a sly smile.*] You'll be glad enough when you borrow them for one of Mrs. Hollingsworth's musicales. And now, I shall finish the paper.

[*EFFIE walks over to the bay-window, seats herself and begins to read again. MARY and MRS. CRESWELL exchange glances. MRS. CRESWELL leaves the room and MARY returns to her accounts. She taps her foot restlessly.*]

EFFIE. Mary! Mrs. Hurst is dead.

MARY. Mrs. Hurst—is—dead?

EFFIE. Listen to the head-lines. "Mrs. Robert Hurst, wife of the well-known journalist, dies of

pneumonia in Paris. Before her marriage Mrs. Hurst was Miss Madeleine Broadbent."

[EFFIE goes over to the table and MARY joins her. They standing reading together.]

MARY. Good Heavens! I must tell Mother. [She goes out hastily.]

EFFIE reads for a while, then drops her paper into her lap and sits thinking. Presently she turns and looks out of the window, bows and smiles to some one outside, gets up, opens her bag, takes out a pocket mirror and looks at herself. She prinks a little, looks at furs as if she is uncertain what to do about them, then goes out. She returns and goes in the direction of the front door. She has taken off the furs. She ushers ROBERT HURST into the room. He is a man of fifty, tall and spare, with a clean shaven, rather sad face. He is well dressed but without either foppishness or the well-groomed appearance of the man of the world. He carries a heavy cane.]

EFFIE. Take off your overcoat, Mr. Hurst, and make yourself at home. [She pauses.] I have just seen the paper and I am so sorry I don't know what to say.

HURST. Don't say anything just now. Sometime, I will tell you all about it, if I may.

EFFIE [smiling up at him]. Whenever you are ready. I'll call Auntie and Mary.

HURST. Not yet, Little Lady. Talk to me yourself for a while. I don't often catch you. [He sits on the lounge. EFFIE sits beside him.]

EFFIE. Well, you know I am a bread-winner and have not many spare minutes.

HURST. "How doth the busy little bee."

EFFIE. You are poking fun at me.

HURST. No, no, Little Lady. I can see for myself

that you don't waste much time. You teach all day and often sew in the evening.

EFFIE. I'm not posing as a martyr. I like to sew. I make all my summer dresses and my blouses.

HURST. Really? You always look so perfectly well-dressed—so chic—yet with such simplicity. I wonder how you do it?

EFFIE. That's the how of it.

HURST [*puzzled*]. I don't understand.

EFFIE. What you just said—simplicity.

HURST. "Beauty unadorned adorned the most."

EFFIE [*speaking with an honest frankness*]. A woman who goes out to earn her living must be fairly well-dressed. It is her asset. And the plainer the dress, the longer it will look well.

HURST. And the cheaper the initial cost?

EFFIE [*hesitatingly*]. Well—er—yes. Yes, of course. But my chief point is length of service. A good plain coat-suit will give four years of service.

HURST. Really?

EFFIE. Yes, indeed—if one knows how to manage. Now, take this one. Just as an illustration, we'll say that I bought it a year ago. It would mean that I wore it last winter as a best dress—on Saturday afternoons, on Sundays and in the evenings with a pretty waist. Then this winter—I will wear it for every day as well as for best. Next year it will be my work-a-day dress only. And the year after, when it is quite shabby, my rainy day dress. And by that time, I have saved a little and can perhaps buy a set of furs.

HURST [*admiringly*]. What wonderful economists some women are!

EFFIE. Oh, no! My little exposition was just a bit of common sense.

[MARY and MRS. CRESWELL enter.]

EFFIE. Come in, ladies. See who's here.

[*Salutations are exchanged and EFFIE turns to go.*]

HURST. Must you go?

EFFIE. I won't be gone long—just around to Hitt's to match some buttons and get some things for Auntie. Hooks and eyes and a piece of tape—wasn't it? Au revoir.

[*She goes out. The front door is heard to open and shut. Her place on the lounge is taken by MARY.*

MRS. CRESWELL takes her own chair by the table.]

HURST. You have seen this morning's paper, Comrade?

MARY. Yes. Will you go to Paris?

HURST. To bring back the—the body? No. My brother and his wife were making a tour of the world. They have reached Paris on the home trip. They will bring the—her over. I will go to New York to meet the steamer, of course. [*In the middle of this speech, MRS. CRESWELL looks curiously at the two on the lounge, quietly lays her work down, and during the next few remarks, tiptoes out of the room unperceived by HURST, though seen by MARY.*]

MARY. I suppose it will not make much difference in your plan of living?

HURST. For the present, no. In the near future, I hope it will. You guessed there was trouble.

MARY. I could not do otherwise, since she lived abroad and you lived here.

HURST. And it was all so unnecessary. She was ruinously extravagant entirely in the way of personal adornment. We men are such fools. We like to see a woman well dressed and do not count the cost behind it.

MARY [*with conviction*]. Pretty clothes cost money.

HURST. I was a staid bachelor when I met her.

She flew like a bright butterfly across my path. She was so beautiful—all flounces and laces and ribbons. How was I to know that the mother denied herself warm underclothing in order to furnish the daughter with furbelows?

MARY. Was she as bad as that?

HURST. Yes, I learned it to my cost after our marriage. For five years we waged an unhappy warfare. I gave her more than her parents ever could afford, but her desires kept climbing higher.

MARY. Wouldn't she listen to reason?

HURST. She would listen to nothing but the promptings of her own desires. Then I took her abroad when I went on business. I hoped that a glimpse of the old world, its sculpture and painting and music, would open her eyes—would show her that there were other things besides finery, for she was clever in her way.

MARY. They always are.

HURST. She saw—Liberty's silks and the glittering shops of Paris.

MARY. Why didn't she return with you?

HURST. We had met two very sweet women, sisters, who were coming home about two months later than I had planned, and my wife begged to be left with them. I thought the companionship was more than safe so I sailed alone. And she will sail—four years later in her coffin.

MARY. Did she never express any desire to come home?

HURST. Never! She was always enjoying herself so much that she would stay just a little longer. And of course she was running into all kinds of extravagances.

MARY. You should have curtailed her.

HURST. I did finally, by sending her a fixed sum

and refusing to go over it. I received some pretty abusive letters, but I was already in debt and I had to slave to make it up. Now, it is all over and I am free.

MARY. Free!

HURST. [*He rises, walks up and down, and then stands in front of her.*] Comrade, would you call me callous?

MARY. You? Never!

HURST. Not even when I tell you that I am going to marry again as soon as the conventions will allow, or sooner?

MARY [*smiling*]. Not even then. You have a right to home and happiness.

HURST. I want a home and I want a wife to whom dress is a secondary consideration.

MARY. Yes.

HURST [*sitting down again*]. I suppose you have noticed how your Cousin Effie dresses.

MARY [*startled*]. Effie!

HURST. I met her last Sunday on Carrollton Avenue just at the time of the after-church parade. She was dressed in the utmost simplicity, and yet she could hold her own with the best.

MARY. Because she was dressed as well as the best.

HURST. Exactly. Plain clothes are always in good taste. Why, there is not one inch of trimming on her suit.

MARY. No, Degan never makes fancy suits. His pride and price are in his lines.

HURST. And her hat has just one ornament, a pretty bird.

MARY. A bird-of-paradise!

HURST [*with delight*]. Is that what you call it?

That is just my idea of Paradise—a place of pretty birds and quietly dressed women.

[*He gets up, walks up and down again and stops before MARY.*]

HURST. Am I too old for Effie? Do you think she could learn to love me?

[*MARY is silent. HURST takes another turn and stands before her.*]

HURST. Then I am too old? Or perhaps there is some one else?

MARY [*in a dead staccato voice*]. You are not too old. There is no one else. I think she will accept you.

[*HURST seizes her hands with such vehemence that she is pulled to her feet.*]

HURST. Dear Comrade! I did not make any mistake in coming to you. I knew you would give me hope.

[*HURST picks up his hat and coat.*]

HURST. Hitt's! That's the trimming shop around the corner, isn't it? I believe I'll go meet her and learn my fate. I suppose it's indecent haste, but only our little world need know it for the present. No, don't come to the door.

[*He goes out, singing in a low clear voice.*]

HURST [*singing*].

Treulich geführt ziehet dahin
Wo euch der Segen der Liebe bewahr'!
Siegreicher Muth, Minnegewinn
Eint euch durch Treue zum seligsten Paar.

[*MARY throws herself on the lounge with a sob as the outside door slams.*]

CURTAIN.

KREYMBORG'S POEM-MIMES

A review of *Plays for Poet-Mimes*
The Other Press, New York, 1918

Alfred Kreymborg can put more of the stark body of the soul into dramatic attitudes, with fewer words, than any playwright living whose work has come into my ken. It is my belief that Kreymborg has a secret he is not communicating to anybody, and that he is creating a theatre—more or less important, you will say? Then I say, it is a Kreymborg theatre, nevertheless, and how many men can you count on your program-worn fingers who have done that?

The production of three of Kreymborg's plays in a single evening, a production I had the good fortune to assist, made it suddenly very plain to me that we had to reckon (in our saner moments when we take time for such exquisite tomfoolishness) with a dramatist who had a way to make and was making it quite without apology. I do not believe there is anything like the Kreymborg formula. It owes somewhat to the young Maeterlinck perhaps, simply as an example of the liberties which an artist may take with impunity.

Kreymborg's real gift is dramatic. Like many others, I had read his poetry (much of which has later been incorporated into plays), and taken immense pleasure in what I regarded as slyly humorous travesties of emotion. I found upon seeing the plays produced, that Kreymborg's word is no more than the throttle to a subtle and complex mechanism. The thin epidermis of poetry covers the body of a living thing.

Fancy a stage set with infinite care as to quaint

taste in forms, and with minute circumspection as to the vitality of detail. Upon this stage, observe the human actors, reduced to the unconscious impersonality of marionettes, and raised to the evocative power of symbols. There you have the foundation of a Kreymborg action—an action that is positively at an irreducible minimum, and apparently capable of expressing anything within the range of human conflict.

When the Willow Nods, a Dance Play, was the first of the three which the Players Club of St. Louis produced. It is a subtle and sustained lyric from beginning to end, both interesting and vital, but is, to my mind, the least significant as drama, perhaps because in this case Kreymborg accepted the full responsibility of his idea of making the words merely an accompaniment. Here the static choral-figure has them all. The action is a dance pantomime which might have as many different interpretations as it should obtain of producers. The deliciously detached commentary removes the spectator from the action, which is interpreted, hinted at, retarded, renewed, encouraged and terminated, with the most delicately fatal insistence imaginable, on the part of the poet. One feels pity for the importunity of events.

Cerebrally intense are all of Kreymborg's plays; eloquence is banished, emotion is as reserved and modest as a back drop.

Manikin and Minikin, a Bisque Play, and *Lima Beans*, a Scherzo Play, are of the essence of high comedy. *Manikin and Minikin* will carry more bales of the insoluble Dilemma on its slender spine of dialogue, than many a lumbering mechanism of the classic boards. It is as crisp with existence as a tiny flame. It might be described as a battle in bric-a-brac. The scene is a very large mantelpiece with a

very large ticking clock, and two very small marionettes, representing seated Dresden figures, bepowdered to the extinction of the human. They toil not, yet they spin; they touch not, yet they fiercely engage. It is a most beautiful duel of symbols . . . nothing breaks but a heart or two. Action, with Kreymborg, is never, as Duse somewhere famously said, "a way of spoiling something."

The third and last Kreymborg play of which I can speak with the authority of having seen the stage-production, is *Lima Beans*. This is a toy farce with a more obvious moral than the playwright usually permits himself. It is a gale of amusement translatable into laughter of any age, generated in a futuristic pattern of domesticity.

We tried to discover, in producing these plays, whether the simplest way was not the best. I hope we did. Large property expense, and too many pastry cooks, would, it is to be feared, spoil them. Yet if I were a Broadway manager the next thing I should do would be to give an adequate season of all of the Kreymborg plays written to date—not because I feel absolutely certain that it would pay (though doubtless it would), but because, by so doing, I should instantly become something more than a Broadway manager, delightful as they are. To be a Broadway manager and then something is, to my notion, to understand the art of life. I say doubtless the experiment would pay, because I am inclined to think that nine-tenths of Kreymborg's success—setting aside always that he is certainly the most painfully conscientious artist in his craft—lies in the fact that he has discovered a new tentacle in that dominant passion of man, Curiosity. Hewing to that broad line, of the nature of the Universal must his imaginings remain.

ORRICK JOHNS.

DRAMA AND THE ENGLISH COURSE

In the usual English course a full measure of achievement is not gained because the literature offered is not a well-organized unit. No one would question the value of most of the individual masterpieces studied—he must question, however, the failure to gain working power in any one year over a significant body of literature. Such procedure has the same weakening effect in mental command over large correlated fields that the nibbling habit has over physical nourishment. There is zest for future achievement in the feeling which a pupil gains when he knows a subject well enough to be able to talk about it freely and intelligently; he has the pride and self-confidence of ownership, a good basis for further acquisition. Attempts to give such unity are occasionally found in courses devoted through whole terms to the literature and thought of a comparatively brief period in its relation to contemporary art and social aspects, and in courses devoted to a particular form of literature. Of these the short story and the drama give greatest opportunity for complete development in the high school. The drama in its many facets offers the greater scope for the all-round training the pupil must get aside from his knowledge of the form studied. Fortunately for such a course, the modern drama is one of the most successful and significant forms of the literature of today. In no other form can one find the social thought, the ethical standards, the better class of popular reactions to life more clearly mirrored. This phase alone makes

drama especially suitable to stimulating class discussion. More than that, the diversity of modern drama gives room for a vital introduction of poetry and of the classic, romantic, and realistic points of view; in fact, of all the general principles of literature and art which a high-school graduate must know in the large if he is to have power over his further reading, or even standards of judgment and a vocabulary in which to express them. Finally the drama seems to the pupil so intimately connected with his own life—because of his inherent interest in dramatic expression rather more than because he sees so many plays or “movies”—that he applies the principles gained in drama study much more quickly to his after-experiences than those which he somewhat somnolently hears expressed in connection with other forms.

In the University High School, the University of Chicago, this year a new course in drama has been formulated. It is in part the outcome of the experience of several years in trying to utilize to a high degree of educational effectiveness the universal desire to give “shows.” Students taking this course meet five times a week and receive a year’s credit for Senior English. (Such an arrangement is possible because of the relaxed requirements for entrance to most colleges. Those pupils who are to take eastern college examinations receive special training in the few pieces of required literature not covered by the class as a whole.) Under the new plan every bit of the enthusiasm of the pupil for dramatic expression is made use of, not only along the lines of development of drama-producing groups, but also along those of the English and art-craft courses. The course begins with a rapid though intelligent reading of modern drama. The pupils read a play in two

days, but can seldom finish discussing it in less than a week unless the points considered are assigned by the instructor and the discussion is limited to them. Each of these first plays represents a different phase of drama. As soon as the class has become acquainted with the field it is to devote itself to tilling, Richard Burton's *How to See a Play* or Elizabeth Hunt's *The Play of Today* is introduced as a textbook and suitable chapters are read in connection with the different plays under discussion. These two books are the most simple and interesting works on the drama for high-school use. The library contains many volumes of the best short plays in English; these are assigned for reading at home on those days when the class is discussing the longer plays already read. By the end of the first six weeks a considerable list is covered. Then the instructor reads others to illustrate the restrictions and possibilities of the one-act form. This feature of the course leads to the bringing in of plots, each presented before the class by its author and discussed by the class. When each pupil has at last found a suitable plot and aim and decided with the class aid upon the atmosphere to be maintained, he writes his play. These are read by the instructor and the class decides which are worth presentation. The selected plays are then acted informally without memorizing so that the class may suggest improvements before the lines are committed to memory. All through the rehearsals the play is being reconstructed and lines are being added as they are found to be needed. Much of this work is performed "after hours." This year a class of twenty-eight supplied nine plays worth working over in this way.

If the class has the time, one or two productions are made of well-known plays by professional playwrights. Such activity quickens the interest and

crystallizes the critical judgments both in writing plays and in studying them in the classroom. Plays are chosen, so far as possible, so that they give no participant a "star" rôle, and so that several boys and girls may have an opportunity for important characterization. If several casts are made up, every person in the class has a chance to take part. For this aim short plays are often more valuable, as they offer a greater variety of "good" parts than does one long one. The duplication of casts is, of course, a drain upon the time of the instructor, but for the class as a whole it is the excellent plan. There are, of course, enough productions so that each cast has a public performance. These various productions may not have the finish possible when the few most facile actors are chosen, but the pupil remains the important factor rather than the production. Attendance of all members of the class for all rehearsals is not always required, but should occur often because each actor sees his faults and virtues in the work of others taking his rôle and is therefore stimulated to do a little more than his best, and because criticism of those not acting is valuable in building up a finished whole.

The plays studied in the course are chosen with three aims in mind other than the primary purpose of providing the pupils with worth-while literature: (1) to give a knowledge of drama forms, (2) to introduce the great world-dramatists, and (3) to illustrate the history of drama in outline. As the interest in the work is most easily aroused by modern plays and as it is with modern plays that the pupil will have to live, the playwrights of today receive major attention. The following typical modern plays are mentioned as in no way definitive, but as answering needs of the class:

The Servant in the House, by Charles Rann Kennedy. A sincere and thoroughly dramatic presentation of the question "If Christ came into our modern life?" Its obvious moral quality is a delight to high-school students. It presents at once the serious comedy as a forum for the discussion of ethical problems.

Mary Goes First, by Henry Arthur Jones. A light, clever comedy of manners.

Cyrano de Bergerac, by Edmond Rostand. One of the great dramas of swashbuckling romance.

The Melting Pot, by Israel Zangwill. An excellent melodrama, portraying vigorously the idea so valuable to pupils, "America the melting-pot of the world."

You Never Can Tell, by George Bernard Shaw. An example of the modern comedy of brilliant conversation and stimulating ideas.

Pelleas and Melisande, by Maurice Maeterlinck. A play illustrating poignantly the drama of mood.

The Thunderbolt, by Sir Arthur Pinero. A remarkable comedy for character-study and significant social satire.

Strife, or *The Silver Box*, by John Galsworthy. Studies of the clash of modern social classes; attempts to clarify our vision toward the complex questions arising from conditions today. The character portrayal in these plays gets much attention.

The Doll's House, by Henrik Ibsen. One of the most significant plays in the trend of modern drama, showing the breaking away from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century technique to that of the psychological drama; a play illustrating the "problem" play in the best sense of the word.

Interest in the history of the drama is most easily gained through an appreciation of modern types. After the moderns have been studied for some weeks, the plays of Sheridan and Goldsmith are taken up. *The Rivals* and *She Stoops to Conquer* are selected as most typical of the authors and the spirit of the period. In every case the relation is established between the play and the life and thought of the period. Between the moderns and the mid-eighteenth century there is little in drama in English that is of

service to the high-school pupil in his later life. This is likewise true of the long stretch from Goldsmith to Shakespeare. An explanation of this barren period is attempted by the instructor rather than by students in individual reports or study of a text. The dramatic material of these years may well be left for graduate study. The next plays chosen are perhaps *Macbeth*, the tragedy-in-verse form of earlier days, and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, the pageant-comedy of Elizabeth's day, or *Twelfth Night*, a representative comedy, or both. As these plays are in most college-entrance recipes, a double purpose is achieved by such a choice. The masque form is exemplified by another college-entrance requirement, Milton's *Comus*. The latter becomes, if studied with visualization as a spoken entertainment (and this is the point of view cultivated from the beginning of the course), a highly interesting phase of dramatic literature. Few pupils who simply read the masque realize that by sheer entertainment interest it "held the boards" in professional English theaters almost annually for two hundred years and is still occasionally presented.

After the Shakespeare and Milton study (the two being studied as of approximately the same period because the masque form belongs essentially in the Elizabethan age) *Everyman* is read aloud on the school stage by a group of pupils who have spent a few hours in preparation. This gives a vivid idea of the morality. The concluding work in the history of English drama is a series of reports by several students on English religious drama based partly on Miss Bates' able treatment of the subject, and the reading aloud, by those in the class who did not take part in *Everyman*, of the *Second Shepherd's Play*, *Abraham and Isaac*, *Noah's Flood*, and other miracle plays. If at this time the interest of the pupils is

not dulled by the older material, a play of Molière is discussed, perhaps *The Learned Ladies*, and individual reports are made on Molière, Goldoni, the *Commedia dell'arte*, and the growth of Pierrot and Columbine, reports largely from Chatfield-Taylor's two works, *Goldoni* and *Molière*. The last play of this survey is a Greek tragedy, probably Euripides' *Medea*, used in the Murray translation and studied in connection with reports by the pupils upon the growth and phases of the Greek theater; the book most frequently used for these reports is Murray's *Euripides and His Age*. The play is cut and then read with explanations by the instructor.

If at this time there is time for further reading it is devoted to other great figures in modern drama. Two plays of today are taken up at the end of the course so that the relation of the modern drama to its historical background may be doubly impressive. Among the plays which are read at this time and are on the list of reading suggested for the various members of the class are the following:

The Bonds of Interest, by Benavente. A recent Spanish version of the old rogue comedy or picaresque romance.

Five plays by Lord Dunsany. These plays represent the new note of fresh virile imagination which is entering modern drama and modern literature.

The Admirable Crichton, by J. M. Barrie. An excellent, well-made, modern character comedy.

Prunella, by Lawrence Housman. An exquisite modern Pierrot phantasy.

The Honeymoon, by Arnold Bennett. A clever modern comedy with clear-cut characterization.

Milestones, by Bennett and Knoblauch. A brilliant comedy with a new technique; excellent in character and theme.

The Squabbles of Chioggia, by Goldoni. A colloquial comedy of old Italy.

Seven short plays by Lady Gregory. Best modern types of the short form.

The Younger Generation, by Stanley Houghton. Successful modern comedy of ideas and character.

A Thousand Years Ago, by Percy MacKaye. Oriental phantasy of power and beauty.

The Piper, by Josephine Peabody. One of the few poetic dramas of today of real power.

Swanwhite, by August Strindberg. An exquisite, virile fairy play. .

If the time permits at the end of the course a week is devoted to other literature than drama to see whether the principles of appreciation and technique carry over into new fields, and to show how the same large principles underlie all forms of art. This enlarges the horizon of the pupil perceptibly by making him feel that he has acquired real understanding of far-reaching basic principles.

The written work of the course takes its initiative from other features of the class work. It has considerable variety, though the greater part of it is expository, dealing with subjects upon which the class has in its recitations (one should say discussions, for of formal recitation there is little) shown tense interest. At the beginning of the course, after considerable attention in class, the pupils write a theme on the somewhat difficult assignment, "Why is a work of art a work of art?" Each pupil chooses not more than five reasons, each of which is developed at length with concrete illustrations. After these have been read and criticised an informal tabulation of the reasons accepted by the class is made as material to be treasured by the class. The next written assignment requires the pupils to apply these same principles to drama and to add what they consider the special elements of worth-while drama. These themes too are read to the class for discussion and for tabulated principles. From this time on the class work or tangent class criticism develops more sub-

jects than can be used. The "movies" give much material. Are the "movies" to be considered art? is a question of real interest, though it may not appeal to the readers as such. Many of the pupils go often to the moving-picture theaters and are eager to justify themselves; the others like to attack the "fans." If after the themes are read the class decides that "movies" are not art, and they usually do when reasons for and against confront them, they are asked to attempt to justify the "movies" on other grounds. This theme in especial usually brings out surprisingly straight thinking. In all assignments of a somewhat abstract character the emphasis is put upon a few ideas, each well developed and illustrated in at least one long paragraph. Reasons not strong enough to be so treated are reserved for class criticism. Reviews of plays read or seen, or points of view differing from those of critics studied, form a considerable portion of the written work. In reviews only a small part of the entire theme may be devoted to the story, and that part must illustrate a point that the reviewer is making. Informal argument arises over discussions of character. Strangely enough some pupils usually are enthusiastic over justifying Mr. Crampton in *You Never Can Tell*, and others are equally ready to prove Shaw wrong in his attitude toward the obligations of children to their parents. *The Doll's House* provokes the query, "Is there an American 'Doll's House'?" or "Is Nora justified in her final decision?" Many short themes are written on scenes or costumes that the pupils are planning or on theatres or settings that they have seen.

It is taken for granted that Seniors know the mechanism of writing. If a pupil shows weakness in any branch he is given individual attention outside of

class so that the majority need not be held back. At the beginning of the year great care is taken to weed out quickly those who have registered for the course but are not clearly fitted to take it. Work of this kind can be pursued to advantage only in a class evenly graded. Many a pupil, however, who has a weak record will put forth redoubled energy and care in order to remain in a class in which so live a subject as modern drama is treated. It is true, too, that the genuine interest of the pupils gives a new thoughtfulness and a surprising accuracy to their work. The amount of unsolicited written work as well as of reading is astonishing. One boy whose written material has been peculiarly slovenly and cramped in other years, is expert in electrical and woodshop work. Now that he is constantly explaining and making stages for the class his themes have become mature and accurate. Another lad who in one week wrote an extra review of a play seen and read two unassigned Ibsen plays was heard to remark in the halls to a fellow-student that the latter should take the drama course, for it was a snap. The speaker had just spent a considerable portion of his Christmas holiday in making an elaborate stage equipped with screens and furniture. At least twice, the second time to put into practice the principles, especially that of proportion, gained from the discussion of the first, pupils retell the story of a play. Even though warned, in the first attempt the pupil will probably not so tell his story that the thread of the main plot will stand out or the last acts get due amount of space. The only other narrative is that contained in the original plots submitted for projected plays. In all the written work the main, though by no means the entire, emphasis is placed upon full, well-rounded thought-development. In the second half of the year

time unrelated to the drama work is devoted to effective sentence-construction and to diction.

There is constant work in oral expression, subject always to class criticism. Articles on stagecraft, new plays, playwrights, or new theatre schemes are given in summarized form. Occasionally a theme subject is used for a long talk before the class. In this work the clearness and fullness of the speaker's outline get attention. At least two rather formal talks are made before the class by each pupil. The first is a review of a chapter or article on some phase of dramaturgy. The speaker outlines the author's ideas, emphasizing those points which he thinks most valuable to the class. These he discusses with considerable fullness. At the end he answers any questions of information or argument that the class may ask. Such talks average fifteen to twenty minutes in length. Through them several books on the drama are covered with interest and intelligence. William Archer's *Playmaking*, assigned to the more able students, is thus brought before the class in its entirety, though it is too difficult for a general textbook. The second formal talk is the presentation of the life, the work, and a critical valuation of a single dramatist. The subjects for this effort are assigned early in the year, though the talk is not given for some months. Liberal excerpts are read from the works of the playwright treated to illustrate points made, and bibliographical references are carefully given. The talks usually last, with the discussion following, for at least one full period.

A few times during the year, when particularly suitable plays are being presented in the city, the class is asked to attend them. As soon as all have seen a play the pupils bring the criticisms of it from the daily papers, which they have been asked to save,

and the various points of view are discussed. In this way the pupils become acquainted with the caliber of the various local critics and are led to formulate standards for dramatic criticism. Later each pupil writes criticisms of the plays he sees. Whenever a pupil has attended a new performance of any merit he gives the class his opinion of it and his advice as to whether the others should see it. It is required of the speakers that they develop their points with concrete examples. This questioning of one's own standards of enjoyment usually awakens the pupil to a new valuation of his recreation. In connection with this same phase of the work magazine criticism of the play seen can often be found. Through this the reliable critics of the country are discovered and the class comes easily to know where to look for information and advice about the theatres. Unfortunately, so far as the value of magazines is concerned, the effective criticism is not found in the periodicals most helpful in general to the pupils. The work of Clayton Hamilton and of Walter Pritchard Eaton is especially worth while to the youthful theater enthusiast.

Young people as a rule have no sincere standards of their own regarding theatre-going, nor indeed regarding their reading. What standards they may profess are usually the artificial ones adopted from, or forced upon them by, their instructors and parents. Such young people are, however, peculiarly sensitive to ridicule. If the ridicule comes in book form it loses its unpleasant personal tone, but leaves its principle all the more clearly impressed. As a consequence, such a book as that of George Jean Nathan, the New York reviewer, *Another Book on the Theatre*, though for mature consumption and perhaps of no great worth, can be used effectively in the classroom. His parodies and burlesques of the cheaper forms of mod-

ern entertainment occasionally read to the class by the instructor are productive of both merriment and serious thought. Little work done in the class has accomplished in the time given it so much toward giving the pupil standards. In a similar way some of Stephen Leacock's humorous skits invite classroom use.

Educational associations are making a valiant effort to improve the long-neglected American speaking voice. A successful experiment in the drama class indicates one way toward progress. Before a play is put into rehearsal, when interest is especially intense, each pupil is asked to prepare for reading before the class a passage which can be obtained in phonographic records. After several pupils have read the selection and been criticised by the class, the record is played. Then comparisons are made between the professional and the student reading. Later other students read, then the class reads with the phonograph once or twice, and finally individuals read with it. During the ensuing weeks from time to time other similar exercises are undertaken. The records at present available are not wholly satisfactory, though they are very helpful; the talking-machine companies are, however, planning new ones made by actors whose diction sets the standard of American speech. In these lessons the class is always tensely alert and thus ready to receive permanent impressions. They see at once their failure to grasp the author's full idea and intention, or their ineffectiveness in giving to the listeners his idea with its proper subordinations of thought; they thus gain a new sense of the value of idea-emphasis by word-emphasis. And they really comprehend, often for the first time, the power and beauty of rhythmic phrasing, whether in every-day prose or in verse. Here the

need of slow, clear enunciation, of distinct syllables, and the use of pause gain a new dignity in their minds.

The physical equipment for such a course as has been described need not be great, though it should contain certain elements, notably a stage with a frontage of at least sixteen feet, a set of screens, and an adequate lighting system. Preferably the stage should be in the classroom, now a workroom, for much of the discussion can be illustrated by concrete examples, and the pupils will come to consider the stage work as part of their daily experience and not a sensational adventure. There is too a camaraderie and an actual unity of purpose in a class working under such conditions that is difficult to maintain in the formal classroom and the formal audience hall. In any case the theatre room should not be large, at the maximum seating less than five hundred people; in a large hall all the naturalness and simple sincerity quickly vanish. There is a world of difference in educational value between the work which is the natural result of classroom effort and the occasionally excellent *tour de force* arising from the excitement of a single production.

The usual scenery in high-school presentation is artistically shocking; a cheaply painted outdoor set, suggesting in its traceries the lace of a bedraggled petticoat rather than God's own trees, and an indoor set which a doll's house would put to shame. As an inexpensive substitute for these the writer has successfully used nine screens. These are made five feet wide by ten feet high, of a light frame covered on both sides with burlap, one side in a dark smoke-blue and the other in a golden color. They can be attached to one another easily, and so attached will stand solidly if set at a slight angle. One screen has an arched

opening which is readily converted into a heavy door of the same burlap, or into a French door, or into a lattice window. If other entrances are needed they are supplied by openings between the screens. Such screens can be purchased from any carpenter for one hundred to one hundred and fifty dollars, or can be made in the school shops.

Most stages are equipped with overhead lights and footlights. Neither is indispensable, though both aid. What one must have are at least two strong movable lights, preferably those known as bunch lights, and strip lights. With these and a few gelatine color slides, red, blue, and amber, which cost about fifty cents each, one can throw the lights from any angle and get most delicate *nuances* of color. A system of dimmers by which each light can be turned on or off gradually is not a necessity, but a very great aid to varied effects. The electric equipment should not cost more than one hundred and fifty dollars even in large cities. The cost of the apparatus itself is a fraction of this figure; it is the installation which increases the expense.

An alert class, stimulated by magazine pictures of the best staging of the modern school, such as that of Gordon Craig, Max Reinhardt, Granville Barker, Robert Jones, or Raymond Johnson, will work out, under direction, settings of surprising freshness and beauty. They must be impressed at the outset, however, with the first principle of modern staging, that there can be nothing on the stage not significant in the tone, or period, or action of the play. In such simple staging every detail must convey the impression desired. A class was recently confronted with the necessity of presenting a goose girl with her geese in the garden of a princess. This was a poser. At last a solution was reached. At one side of the

proscenium arch a silhouette tree branch of beaver board swept gracefully downward and across two-thirds of the arch. This was balanced by a silhouette tree trunk on the other side at the back between two screens. A formal wall was indicated by rectangles of beaver board with an opening between, on each side of which were small, highly conventionalized bay trees of beaver board, indicating the entrance to the palace. The geese? They appeared as a cream-white dado at the foot of the screens. In this case, as in most cases, the neutral color of the screens became mere distance or background. The audience was not conscious of them, for they served merely as a means of emphasizing the significance of the properties.

A king's walled garden was ably suggested by placing against the blue screens: (1) a white statue (from the art department) on a long packing-box painted white, the whole set between two small fir trees at the back; (2) two white pillars for the gateway at an entrance between screens at one rear corner; (3) a long white packing-box bench with a small fir tree at each end; (4) a flight of steps at the other front end, the steps placed at the side near the footlights, receding behind the curtain. A few window boxes from the various classrooms formed a low border of greenery along the base of the screens. The steps, bench, and pillars were made for a few dollars by the boys in the school shops. If screens are not to be secured, similar effects can be obtained against a permanent hanging of fulled drapery. This should hang from rods above the line of vision of the spectators, should cover the three walls of the stage completely, should be made in separate sections to permit entrance from any point, and should move easily on the rods. Amateurs who use draperies often fail utterly because the drapery is allowed to become mussy or

spotted. Such a setting requires absolute neatness and accuracy and a greater significance and conventionalization of the properties than does any other type. A safe color for the draperies is a warm gray, as this takes colored light effects easily.

The habit of enjoyable reading of plays requires a visualization which nearly all pupils possess, though it is perhaps latent. This power, which is a powerful asset in almost every form of reading, can be stimulated by arousing in the pupils a feeling for stage settings. The play becomes a living reality if they see the characters moving vividly across a realized background. Thus settings for scenes read receive considerable attention, and usually without definite assignment pupils bring in their ideas. Since the planning or discussing of a setting necessitates the closest attention to the underlying mood of the scene as well as to the physical needs of the actors, one of the aims of the instructor is gained without artificial effort on his part: the pupil must know his play or he is "out of it" as far as scenery is concerned. The ability to sense the accurate atmosphere of reading-matter—poem, essay, drama, or editorial—is a valuable asset. The work in settings, of course, lends real assistance to the graphic-art department in vitalizing and freshening the attitude of the pupils toward their work. In the present course settings for the plays to be produced are discussed both in the drama class and in the art classes, and those pupils who are in both departments form an informal committee to transfer ideas back and forth, the art department carrying the ideas into execution. This same relationship is maintained between the drama class and the costume-design class, the latter shaping its course toward the planning and purchasing of materials and the making of the costumes needed. Similar co-operation is

entered into with the shops and the music department when aid is needed. Each element is considered by the class in its relation to a real unity in the production.

To further the interest of the pupils in settings and to give initial information needed to support such interest, early in the year a "gallery committee" is appointed. This group receives and mounts on large cards of a uniform size all scene, stage, theatre, and costume designs of significance which the pupils can find. No pictures of actors or actresses are included unless in some way they represent a pertinent phase of artistic stage production. In late years the better class of illustrated magazines has printed much valuable material of this kind. Colored covers and other decorative materials not intended for the stage are often stimulating. As this gallery continues through the years it should form a collection of interest far beyond the school precincts.

Another branch of class activity allied closely to the gallery is the making of small stages. Each pupil at the beginning of the second term builds for himself a stage. These are usually made from packing boxes mounted on legs and painted. A pasteboard proscenium arch hides the intimate workings behind the scenes. The stage is set with screens or draperies. Later each pupil reads a different play and makes a setting suited to it. The rivalry in this undertaking is provocative of remarkable results. One boy interested in electricity and lighting effects made a Fortuny dome stage and equipped it electrically for demonstrations before the class. When the class progress permits the time, stories are written suited to production as puppet plays or shadow plays. After the work has been done on modern stages the class is sufficiently familiar with this *métier* that it can vis-

ualize at once historic types of stages, the Elizabethan, the middle-Italian, and the Grecian, and can discuss intelligently the advantages and disadvantages of each and its relation to the type of play presented. Occasionally pupils interested in "making things" attempt miniature reproductions of each of the types studied.

At the end of the course the pupils have been concerned in a practical application of all the arts and crafts of the school; they have had considerable experience in presenting effectively before the class material which they have themselves organized; they have spent many hours in creative work ending in an approach to professional fruition; they have read several volumes of solid critical writing; they have studied twelve plays in class and have read at least thirty more; they have held live discussions on many of the vital problems of the day; they have formed standards for the appreciation of all the arts; and they have gone a long way toward the mastery of the technique, not only of reading and writing drama, but of rapid, intelligent reading of all types of literature.

THEODORE BALLOU HINCKLEY.

MAIDEN OVER THE WALL

A FANTASY

By

BERTRAM BLOCH

The Characters are:

ALEEN, a maid of Arthur's court, a victim of Merlin's enchantment, guarded for years and years by the

DRAGON, who once was a puppy; and

GRAHAM, who, out for a tramp in the woods, comes unexpectedly to the garden wall and mounts it.

[*The scene is a garden out of the world.*

It is late afternoon of a bright October day. The sun is still shining on the little garden, which nestles at the edge of the wood, cut off from it by an old stone wall. In the center of the garden is a tall oak, venerable but still straight, and hanging from one of its lower branches is a great shield with a heraldic device emblazoned on it. On a stone bench which half encircles a small table is seated ALEEN, peering into a silver mirror. She is combing her long black hair. She wears a gown of dark green, and about her waist is a loose-hanging golden girdle.]

VOICE [*outside the wall*].

It's heigho and heyo, with never a care or sorrow,
He who would live, must live today,
For there may be no tomorrow.

[*ALEEN starts up and faces the wall.*]

Hello. A wall, a blank wall, with neither a door nor a gate.

[*There is a pause, during which ALEEN draws nearer to the wall.*]

Well, here goes.

[*The owner of the voice is heard climbing.*]

In all storied prose there was never a wall,

There was never a wall in rhyme.

There was never a wall, be it lowly or tall,

That somebody didn't climb.

And here we are on top.

[GRAHAM appears. *He swings himself up and sits astride the wall. He is attired for walking—a golf cap, white sweater and knickerbockers. ALEEN moves behind the table and watches him intently.*]

GRAHAM. Howdy do. I hope I haven't frightened you. Can't resist climbing, you know. [*Raising his voice.*] Show me a wall and I'll never be satisfied until I climb it. [*He looks down on the side from which he has come.*] Kicked off a good bit of the plaster. Seems very old. Romans might have built it, eh?

ALEEN [*in wide-eyed wonder*]. Who art thou and for what quest dost thou come hither?

GRAHAM [*swinging his other leg over and sitting comfortably.*] My dear, I tell you in full confidence that I am Humpty Dumpty, and if you'll be angry I'll have a great fall. As for my quest—um—I'm seeking the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow.

ALEEN. Then why didst thou essay to enter this garden, Sir Humpty?

GRAHAM. You flatter me, mademoiselle, but the title is misapplied. Humpty Dumpty was not knighted. If anything, poor soul, he was benighted. No wisdom, lacked mentality, lost his balance, and

went all to smash. Sad, isn't it? As for climbing the wall— [*leaning over*]

Said I to myself, said I,
They don't build a wall so high,
Unless it's to screen
Some beautiful scene
From the gaze of the passer-by.

Then having duly cogitated upon this,

Said I to myself, said I,
Tho the wall be ever so high,
I shan't let them screen
What ought to be seen
From my inquisitive eye.

So up I came, and here I am, anxiously awaiting your invitation to come down.

ALEEN. To enter here?

GRAHAM. Woefully improper, isn't it? But you tell me all the people you know, and I'll tell you all the people I know, and it wouldn't surprise me in the least if we discovered mutual friends. Suppose you begin. Wait a moment; we can simplify matters a bit. You can leave out all lords, all people with incomes over a thousand pounds, all Chinamen, all Turks—no—I do know a Turk—makes my cigarettes—but I don't suppose you smoke, so he's out of it—all Eskimau—all—oh, well, begin.

ALEEN [*sadly*]. All my friends are dead.

GRAHAM [*soberly*]. You must find it lonely—here all alone.

ALEEN. I do.

GRAHAM. How long have you been here?

ALEEN. Last Valentine's day it was fourteen centuries.

GRAHAM [*staggered*]. I beg your pardon. Did you say fourteen centuries?

ALEEN [*mournfully*]. Yes.

GRAHAM [*shaking his finger at her*]. My dear young lady, you are poking fun at me. You will cause a smile to appear on my face; it will grow and grow until at last, rocking with laughter, I shall roll off the wall, and—you know that all the King's horses and all the King's men won't be the least good in the world.

ALEEN [*seriously*]. But I am not jesting.

GRAHAM. Then, very young lady, what are you doing?

ALEEN [*angrily*]. I speak the truth, and it is most unknighly of thee to doubt me.

GRAHAM. Very well, I'll believe you.

ALEEN [*stamping her foot*]. Thou dost not. Unbelief is written on thy countenance!

GRAHAM [*hastily putting his hands over his face*]. Oh, my honest face. But really you can't blame me for being skeptical. Methuselah was only nine hundred and sixty-nine years old, and you talk of fourteen hundred.

ALEEN [*tearfully*]. Fourteen hundred and twenty.

GRAHAM. There, you see! Ordinary mortals don't live to be that old.

ALEEN. But I am here by reason of an enchantment.

GRAHAM. An enchantment?

ALEEN. Come down, and I shall tell thee. But wait! First I must ask thee a question.

GRAHAM. What is it? My name, my station, profession, whether sane or insane?

ALEEN. Nay, it is none of these.

GRAHAM. What is it?

ALEEN. Hast thou killed many dragons?

GRAHAM. Dragons? Um—I'm afraid I've never killed any.

ALEEN [*surprised*]. Never killed any!

GRAHAM. Whatever else I may be, I am truthful, and even if it's going to lower me in your estimation, I cannot help but assert that never has a dragon been slain by my hand.

ALEEN. Think. Thou mayst have forgotten.

GRAHAM [*after reflecting a moment, his finger pressed against his forehead*]. There. I have reviewed my past from the days of my cradle until now, and nowhere do I find the record of any little dragons made orphans by me.

ALEEN [*quickly*]. Then thou mayst come down.

GRAHAM [*jumping off the wall*]. I always knew that my refusal to kill dragons would some day bring its reward. [*Having landed on his feet, he rubs his hands together to rid them of the dust.*] Charming place this.

ALEEN. Come. [*She leads him to the bench; they sit down together.*]

I am here through a sorcerer's magic,
A slave of his terrible skill;
And the tale that I tell is most tragic,
For the magic continueth still.

GRAHAM. Who was this wizard?

ALEEN. Merlin.

GRAHAM. Merlin, indeed. And why did Brother Merlin remove you from the path of Time?

ALEEN [*in awed tones*]. He was wroth with me.

GRAHAM. Impossible. No one could be angry with you.

ALEEN [*looking at him*]. Why not?

GRAHAM. Now you're fishing.

ALEEN [*perplexed*]. Fishing? Forsooth, I am not fishing, nor are there any fish in the garden.

GRAHAM [*hastily*]. Yes, I know.

ALEEN. Then why didst thou?—

GRAHAM. Jestng, my dear, jestng.

ALEEN [*pouting*]. A sorry jest. Truly thou hast small wit.

GRAHAM [*eager to change the subject*]. There, there, let's talk of something else.

ALEEN. Of the enchantment?

GRAHAM. Yes, though I believe you are more enchanting than enchanted.

ALEEN [*smiling*]. That is very pretty—much prettier than fishing. Fishing, forsooth!

GRAHAM [*taking her hand*]. You were going to tell me of the enchantment.

ALEEN.

Long ago when Arthur reigned
O'er this fearsome land,
Merlin by his magic gained
Place at his right hand.

Merlin, harsh and cruel and grim,
Feared on every side;
Woe to them who angered him;
Better to have died.

I was blithesome, young and fair,
Light as falling dew,
Little that I would not dare;
Fear I never knew.

But one day too daringly,
Stole I to his room,
Drank of Merlin's special tea;
There I met my doom.

[*She sighs.*]

GRAHAM. Drank his tea? And that angered him?

ALEEN [*sadly*]. Aye. Never had I seen him so angered.

GRAHAM. But to drink tea; surely there's nothing very terrible in that.

ALEEN. It was his own brew.

GRAHAM [*walking about*]. Petty larceny, that's all it is.

ALEEN [*insistently*]. Thou dost not understand. It was his own tea; grown for him by the goddess of the sun in the distant land of Inde. Seven times seven years it grew ere it was picked, and then seven times seven virgins gathered it up. In a carved ship with timbers of precious teakwood, and burnishings of gold, was it brought across the seven seas to England, and none dared look upon it save the wizard.

GRAHAM. Then you were brave.

ALEEN [*shuddering*]. Nay, rash.

ALEEN. Never shall I lose the memory of that time, when he, clad in his dark robes, burst into his chamber and found me sipping his tea. A moment he stood, his long, bony hands raised above his head, his eyes flashing, his lips snarling—a moment he stood; then mumbling imprecations in his gray beard, he seized Galahad—

GRAHAM. Galahad?

ALEEN. My harmless little puppy. A touch of the wand, and lo! he had become a huge, scaly dragon, with lashing tail, and fire-breathing nostrils. Merlin laughed a harsh, wicked laugh, as I crouched trembling against the wall, the shattered tea-cup in my hand. Then he chanted—

In a walled-about citadel thou wilt remain,

And the ages pass over thy head,

Until some brave knight, who hears of thy plight,

Will seize the gaunt dragon, and—not strike him dead,

But take him and shake him, at last to remake him
a little brown puppy again.

GRAHAM. H'm, a little brown puppy, eh? And how is that to be done?

ALEEN. By a magic greater than Merlin's.

GRAHAM. Have any tried?

ALEEN. At first many, knights from Wales and Ireland, adventurers from Gaul, princes from the far lands of the East, sorcerers of Cathay; many and many. Of late, in the last few centuries there have been but few.

GRAHAM. And what happened to all of these adventurers?

ALEEN [*wiping away a tear*]. Galahad ate them.

GRAHAM. Ate them! [*In consternation.*]. Where is he now?

[*He looks around.*]

ALEEN. In the castle. [*Quickly, anxiously.*] Thou wilt not injure him?

GRAHAM. Injure him? I can assure you I didn't have the slightest intention of so doing.

ALEEN [*seriously*]. Nobody must injure Galahad. That was why I asked thee whether thou hadst killed any dragons ere I permitted thee to enter the garden.

GRAHAM. But if he eats people he should be killed.

ALEEN [*pleading*]. You must forgive him. Remember it is through no fault of his that he is now a dragon. I'm sure that he would much rather be a little brown puppy again, and snuggle in my arms.

GRAHAM. I shouldn't wonder, still—

ALEEN. And think—if Galahad is slain, he cannot then be changed into a puppy, and I must forever remain under the spell. No, bethink thee, there must

be some way to free me. [*Looking into his face.*] Thou art brave, and thy face is not dull even if thou didst pass so sorry a jest.

GRAHAM. Thank you. [*He rises.*] It's certain that somebody must have discovered a method to change dragons into puppies, for although our streets are filled with dogs, the race of dragons, with the exception of that species used to chaperon budding maidens, has vanished from the earth. [*He snaps his fingers.*] I have it. It won't change the dragon, but what of that?

ALEEN [*eagerly*]. Tell me quickly.

GRAHAM [*triumphantly*]. Simple, practicable, and easy of execution. Little expense; in fact, no expense. And accomplished in a moment. Perfect. And to think that it took fourteen centuries to find someone with mentality enough to discover it.

ALEEN [*impatiently*]. Hasten, hasten!

GRAHAM [*proudly*]. It's just this, nothing more. I climb the wall, lift you up and over, and then off we go, away from the garden forever.

ALEEN [*crestfallen, her hopes dashed to the ground*]. Oh!

GRAHAM [*surprised*]. You don't approve of the plan?

ALEEN [*sadly*]. Every one has suggested that.

GRAHAM [*dismally*]. Every one?

ALEEN. All save two—and they found Galahad when they climbed the wall.

GRAHAM. Why did you never put it into execution?

ALEEN [*miserably*]. If I leave the castle ere the spell is broken, I shall crumble into little pieces.

GRAHAM. So that's it, eh? Into little pieces. H'm. That would hardly do, would it? We can't be pasting you together again like a picture puzzle, can we?

[*There is a terrific roar.*]

ALEEN [*in terror*]. Galahad! Go, go!

GRAHAM [*nervously*]. So he's coming, eh? [*He hesitates.*] I can't go and leave you here.

ALEEN. I pray thee go. Only harm will come to thee if thou stayest here.

GRAHAM [*uncertain*]. I can't bear the thought of leaving you here for another fourteen centuries.

[*There is another roar.*]

ALEEN [*her hands on his shoulders*]. Go!

GRAHAM. Did you urge all your would-be rescuers, as you are urging me?

ALEEN. N—o.

GRAHAM. Then why are you so anxious to have me go?

ALEEN [*blushing*]. It were unmaidenly for me to say.

[*Another roar much nearer is heard.*]

GRAHAM [*seizing her hands*]. Is it?—

ALEEN [*hanging her head*]. Yes, it is.

GRAHAM [*kissing her*]. Sweetheart. Er—by the way—what is your name?

ALEEN. Aleen. But go, go—a moment and it will be too late!

GRAHAM. Aleen [*musings*], Aleen Graham, very pretty. [*She tugs at his arm.*] Aleen, were this dragon twice as blue, three times as scaly, and a hundred times as fierce, I would face him. No sixth century dragon is going to drive me away. Let it be brain against brawn. [*ALEEN throws herself into his arms.*] Graham, he comes. Let me meet him alone. [*ALEEN reluctantly leaves him and goes to the bench, where she crouches in fear. The dragon enters. He is blue and scaly, with a broad, ugly mouth, from which protrude two antennæ. He has a long tail.*]

DRAGON [*stopping and surveying GRAHAM*]. A—h.

GRAHAM [*nervously*]. How do you do, Galahad?

DRAGON [*advancing*]. A—h.

GRAHAM [*excitedly*]. Now see here. Keep your proper distance, my man—I should say my dragon. I warn you that I will not tolerate any impertinence.

[*The dragon continues to advance menacingly.*]

GRAHAM [*retreating*]. Don't do anything rash—anything that you'll be sorry for afterwards. Listen to reason. Suppose you do eat me. What will be the result? Indigestion probably—violent indigestion.

[*The dragon growls, and strikes at him.*]

ALEEN [*wailing*]. Galahad!

GRAHAM. Come, come. Let us sit down and discuss this rationally—without haste, without heat.

ALEEN [*as the dragon comes closer*]. Talk is useless. Defend thyself, defend thyself. [*The dragon prepares to seize GRAHAM. The latter looks about for a weapon. Seeing none, he leaps up and breaks off a branch of the tree. Wielding this as a club, he closes in. With a single blow the dragon breaks the club in twain. GRAHAM is embraced by the dragon, and the breath squeezed from his body. ALEEN tears her hair.*] Oh! Oh! Oh! [*The dragon props GRAHAM against the tree. Then getting a rope from the table, he ties him to it. Having tested the strength of the rope, he gives a grunt of satisfaction, and lumbers off, leaving GRAHAM limp and lifeless. ALEEN lifts up GRAHAM's head.*] Oh, gallant knight; my Lancelot, my Arthur. Forgive me, forgive me!

GRAHAM [*looking up*]. Ah. [*He shudders and looks about.*] Where is he?

ALEEN. Gone—gone to procure his utensils.

GRAHAM. What utensils?

ALEEN. His knife and fork and plate. Alas!

GRAHAM [*shaking his head*]. There, there, don't cry.

ALEEN. I can't help it.

GRAHAM [*mournfully*]. What an end! [*He sings.*]

I've escaped from scarlet fever, German measles and the mumps,

I have fought my way through childhood, and have taken all its bumps.

On my legs are pussy's scratches,

I have played with parlor matches,

And have even been so reckless as to smoke my father's stumps.

I have joined a secret order and have ridden on their goat,

I have often been out rowing with the fool who rocks the boat;

And instead of getting knowledge

I played football for my college,

And I've often drunk the wine of an Italian table d'hôte.

And I'm sure if I'd failed to escape every danger

I would not have cared a jot,

But to be eaten up by an absolute stranger—

That is too sorry a lot.

[*He repeats the last two lines sadly.*]

ALEEN. Try, try! There must be some way for thee to save thyself.

GRAHAM. No, I'm afraid I'm cooked—or will be very soon.

[*The dragon re-enters bearing cups, saucers, plates and the like; a bottle of ale to drink, and salt and pepper to season his food. He is very cheerful and evidently anticipates a most delightful evening.*]

Night is drawing on; so he has taken the precaution of bringing a candle with him.]

ALEEN [*tearfully*]. Good-bye. [*She kisses him and turns away.*] Every time I see Galahad henceforth, I shall think of thee.

[*She kneels down and buries her head in her arms. The dragon whets a knife. GRAHAM suddenly lifts his head. A broad smile spreads over his face. He laughs.*]

GRAHAM. Wait! [*His cry startles the dragon into dropping a plate; ALEEN looks up.*]

GRAHAM. I have it! [*Sternly.*] Dragon! Look at me! [*The dragon, unabashed, calmly surveys him.*] Dragon! You're sleepy. [*The dragon shakes his head in denial.*] Don't turn away! Look at me! [*The dragon looks at him, blinking a little.*] You are very — very — sleepy. [*The dragon grunts and then dances to show how wide awake he is.*] Look at me. Don't dance! You're too sleepy to dance. Much, much too sleepy. Don't yawn. [*The dragon stops dancing; then — he yawns.*] Poor, poor dragon. So sleepy, so very, very sleepy. [*The dragon rubs his eyes and staggers uncertainly.*]

Go to sleep, drowsy, drowsy one;

Go to sleep, to sleep.

The day is done — the long, long day is done.

Go to sleep, go to sleep.

[*The dragon sinks down.*]

Slumber — slumber — slow solemn slumber,
Dreams — dreams — dreams without number —
Sleep.

[*The dragon snores.*]

ALEEN [*after a moment's whispering*]. It's magic;
it's magic.

GRAHAM. No, dear, just mentality. [*To the dragon.*] Rise. [*The dragon rises.*] Unbind me. [*The dragon shuffles over, and unties him.* GRAHAM stretches his arms.]. So.

ALEEN [*breathlessly*]. Make him a puppy — make him a puppy!

GRAHAM. Oh, yes; almost forgot that. Dragon, become a puppy. [*The dragon rolls on the ground puppy-wise, waving his legs and barking.*] There, you see. The enchantment is broken.

ALEEN [*doubtfully*]. I'm afraid it isn't.

GRAHAM. Why isn't it?

ALEEN. When enchantments are broken there is always thunder and lightning.

GRAHAM [*airily*]. The thunder and lightning works are probably rusted.

ALEEN [*shaking her head*]. I'm afraid to try. Suppose I climb the wall and the spell isn't broken? I'll be just a heap of dust on the other side.

GRAHAM. But why isn't it broken?

ALEEN. I think though Galahad only fancies himself a puppy, he is still a dragon.

GRAHAM [*regretfully*]. It's really too bad. [*He looks at the dragon rolling about.*] If he could only talk, I'd force it from him.

ALEEN [*quickly*]. He can write.

GRAHAM [*skeptically*]. Write?

ALEEN [*nodding vehemently*]. He had to send Merlin monthly reports.

GRAHAM [*taking pencil and paper from his pocket*]. If that's the case, we'll soon find the way to break the enchantment. [*To the dragon.*] Write how the spell may be broken. Write! [*Slowly and laboriously the dragon writes. He finishes.* GRAHAM takes the paper; clears his throat.]. Ah! [*Reading.*] "Liat ym fo ——" That doesn't make sense.

ALEEN [*dejectedly*]. Oh! I thought that he wrote English.

[*She sinks down on the bench.*]

GRAHAM [*stamping about*]. There go our hopes. [*Giving a kick to the barking dragon.*] You ignoramus!

ALEEN [*with a little cry.*] Don't kick him.

GRAHAM. Won't do his scaly hide any harm. This is a pretty state of affairs, isn't it? I can't go on hypnotizing that dragon to the end of my days, and if once I stop—I'm gone. On the other hand, if we try to make off, like a puff of smoke, you're gone.

ALEEN. [*She has been thinking and suddenly starts up.*] The mirror, the mirror!
[*She picks up the mirror and dances about with it, holding it high over her head.*]

GRAHAM [*bewildered*]. What's the matter? Stand still a moment.

ALEEN [*breathlessly*]. It's magical writing and is written backwards.

[*She continues to dance.*]

GRAHAM. Hurrah! [*He joins her; they trip a measure, keeping time to his words.*]

Truth of the mirror and maidenly love,
Honor and strength of man,
These be the trio exalted above
All since the world began.

[GRAHAM holds the mirror up, and ALEEN places the paper before it.]

GRAHAM [*reading*].

If ye wish to use a method that was never known to fail,

Take some salt and pour it quickly on the end of my tail.

Hurrah!

ALEEN. Quickly, quickly!

[GRAHAM *seizes the salt-shaker.*]

GRAHAM. I wonder which end?

ALEEN [*pointing to the tip of the tail*]. I think — I think that 's the very end; so let us begin there.

GRAHAM [*standing over the dragon*]. Here goes. [*He starts to shake the salt. Immediately the stage becomes darker and a rumble is heard. At each subsequent shake the darkness increases, until finally it is black.*] That's all. [*There is a terrific crash. Then slowly the stage lightens.* ALEEN, clasped in GRAHAM's arms, is white with terror. Then as she sees that the dragon has gone, and in his place is a little brown puppy, she gives a cry of joy, and pouncing on him, crushes him to her. GRAHAM wipes his brow.] Well, well, well. [*He shakes his head.*] To think that that great fire-breathing beast was only a little puppy after all! Mirrors do bring out strange truths at times. [*Turning away.*] Just the same, I'm glad it's over. [*The sun is setting and the stage grows darker.*] Guess I'd better be going. The woods will be dark soon.

ALEEN [*looking up anxiously*]. Going?

GRAHAM. Yes; the sun's setting. It will be dark soon.

ALEEN. Thou canst not go alone. [*Still clasping the puppy tightly, she goes to the table and takes from it a book. She opens it and reads.*]

It is writ in golden letters,
That whoever breaks the fetters
Of the long enduring magic of the wizard dark and
grim,
Will assume a domination,
If he be of knightly station,

And the disenchanted maiden will at once belong to him.

So thou must take me with thee.

GRAHAM [*considering*]. That's not so easy, my dear.

ALEEN [*not understanding*]. Not easy?

GRAHAM. It will be difficult to explain.

ALEEN. What is there to explain?

GRAHAM. About you and Galahad. The dragon, Merlin, the enchantment, all of it.

ALEEN [*simply*]. Why, thou canst show them Galahad.

GRAHAM. I fear that won't be sufficient proof.

ALEEN [*putting her arm through his*]. Then thou must subdue them with thy magic. [*The sun is very low; the garden is in deep shadow. Over the garden wall it is still rosy-light. She speaks softly.*] Dost thou love me?

GRAHAM. Assuredly.

ALEEN. Then what does it matter whether the world believes or doubts?

GRAHAM. Right you are.

[*He kisses her.*]

ALEEN. And Galahad?

GRAHAM. Galahad comes too.

ALEEN [*taking his hand*]. Then come.

GRAHAM. I'm ready.

ALEEN [*softly*].

Over the wall and away and away,
To the wonderful world outside;
Hasten, oh, hasten, while yet it is day,
Ere the shadows glide, ere they glide.

Often it's called me to play, "come and play,"
The voice of the world outside.
But I was held fast, 'neath the sorcerer's sway;
Soon the voice died, soon it died.

Now it is calling as once was its way,
The beautiful world outside;
"Come to me, come to me, do not delay,
Come little bride, little bride."

Let us together away and away,
To the wonderful world outside.
See in the woodlands the lingering day,
And the setting sun is our guide.

*[Together they go behind the tree, and begin to
mount the wall. The garden is quite dark.]*

GRAHAM.

In all storied prose there was never a wall,
There was never a wall in rhyme,
There was never a wall, be it lowly or tall,
That some lovers didn't climb.

Here we are on top. Look out for Galahad. Now
over. *[They disappear.]* Here's where I kicked off
a bit of plaster. Never could resist climbing a wall,
you know.

GRAHAM AND ALEEN:

And it's heigho and heyo, begone all care and sorrow,
For there's happiness come to us today
And joy is due on the morrow.

CURTAIN

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THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review Devoted to the Play and
the Theatre

November, 1918

THE DRAMA

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

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THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review Devoted to the Drama

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THE CHRISTMAS GUEST

BY SARA KINGSBURY

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

ANDREW.

CONSTANCE, the wife.

THE GRANDMOTHER.

HELENE.

HELENE'S CHILD.

TIME: Christmas eve.

PLACE: A peasant's cottage.

SCENE: *The kitchen of the home. It is a large, clean, cheerful room. In the center is the Christmas supper table with its festive decorations. On the left stands the Christmas tree. In the rear is a window. The curtain is not drawn and a candle burns on the sill.*

As the curtain rises CONSTANCE is placing the final decorations on the tree. She pauses at intervals and steps back to view her work. Occasionally she glances with expectant face toward the window. When the tree is decorated she lights the tapers and then hastens to the window and looks searchingly into the darkness. She turns from the

window, sighing deeply. The grandmother enters, carrying reverently a carved wooden candlestick with white waxen tapers.

THE GRANDMOTHER. Thy heart is heavy tonight, my daughter.

CONSTANCE. [*Trying to smile.*] I am a foolish woman, Grandmother. I heard a noise in the darkness yonder—some lamb bleating by the ewe's side, or our old horse whinnying for Andrew. I thought that it was my Helene's voice and that she called "Mother." I hastened to the window and the cold dark night smote my soul. You have brought the candlestick, Grandmother?

THE GRANDMOTHER. [*Placing the candlestick on the table.*] Yea, my daughter. Light the candles and place the chair. [*Reverently.*] Tonight may the Christ Child sup at this house.

CONSTANCE. [*Sadly.*] Grandmother, shall the joy ever be ours?

THE GRANDMOTHER. [*Placing her hand affectionately upon the candlestick.*] This candlestick sat at the Christ Child's place in my father's house and in his father's father's house. Often did our grandfather tell how the Christ Child came on a Christmas eve and supped at his father's table. This same candlestick served them as now. Light the candles, daughter, and place the chair. We know not when or how He may appear, but ever on a Christmas eve He comes as a guest to that house which is most ready to receive Him.

CONSTANCE. [*Bitterly.*] And is not this house most fit to welcome him? Look, Grandmother, the hearth burns bright and clear. Thou canst see thy face in every dish and spoon on yonder table as

in a mirror. Naught is unprepared. Say, Grandmother, will He come?

THE GRANDMOTHER. Yea, my child, He will come. He will come when this house is made ready to receive Him.

CONSTANCE. Is it not ready, Grandmother?

THE GRANDMOTHER. The house is garnished well, but it is the garnished heart of them that dwell here that must bid the Christ Child come and sup. Light the candles, daughter, and place the chair.

CONSTANCE. That has ever been thy task, Grandmother, and Andrew would take it ill if I should rob thee of thy service to the Christ Child.

THE GRANDMOTHER. Nay, daughter, thou art the mistress here, and thou the one to bid the Christ Child come and sup in this house, a welcome guest. Light the candles, daughter, and place the chair.

CONSTANCE. Nay, I cannot.

THE GRANDMOTHER. Thou wouldst snatch from me the hope to have the Christ Child sup with Andrew and thee before I go? Another Christmas I shall be away. This night must Andrew and thee learn to bid the Christ Child welcome.

CONSTANCE. Nay, Grandmother, do not speak of thy going away. Thou hast been mother, husband, child—all—since Helene sinned and Andrew drove her forth to wander—accursed as Cain.

THE GRANDMOTHER. [*Weeping.*] Helene. My little Helene, my pet, my lamb. [*Drying her eyes.*] Light the candles, daughter, and place the chair.

CONSTANCE. Do it thyself, Grandmother, I cannot. [*She goes to the window and looks into the darkness.*]

THE GRANDMOTHER. Thou dost not welcome the Christ Child, my daughter.

CONSTANCE. [*Turning from the window.*] Grandmother!

THE GRANDMOTHER. Nay, daughter, thou dost not. Thou hast not welcomed Him these five years.

CONSTANCE. [*Dully.*] Since Helene went away.

THE GRANDMOTHER. Yea, since Helene went away.

CONSTANCE. And Andrew closed the door upon her.

THE GRANDMOTHER. Yea, Andrew did close the door upon her, and thou didst bar and bolt it to shut out the Christ Child and thy own.

CONSTANCE. 'Tis false and thou art cruel. [*She sinks into a chair and covers her face with her hands.*]

THE GRANDMOTHER. Nay, my daughter, it is true. With bitter heart hast thou got in order thy house for the Holy Child. And thou hast thought in hate of any child who might sup here where thy own is forbid. Where hate dwells the Christ Child cannot come. And in rejecting Him thou hast shut out thy own child. In his anger did Andrew shut the door upon thy child. Thy hate hast made it fast with bolt and bar. Welcome the Christ Child, my daughter, and this night shall Andrew welcome thine.

CONSTANCE. Andrew's anger still burns hot.

THE GRANDMOTHER. Thy hate is the fuel that feeds his wrath.

CONSTANCE. I have been dutiful, Mother.

THE GRANDMOTHER. Thou hast kept his house in order and hast served him well. But thou hast withheld thy love. Thy love alone can melt his anger.

CONSTANCE. He drove my child into the world.

THE GRANDMOTHER. And thou didst bolt and bar the door. Come, my daughter, light the candles and place the chair and bid the Christ Child be our guest.

[CONSTANCE comes reluctantly from the window. Her face has become serene and almost joyous. She lights the candles and places the chair, kneeling silently before it. THE GRANDMOTHER smiles gently and comes and lays her hand on her head. At the window stands a young girl with a child in her arms, her face pressed against the pane. As CONSTANCE arises the girl disappears.]

CONSTANCE. [Going to the dresser and bringing a package wrapped in gay Christmas paper.] It is Andrew's present. Helene had made it for his Christmas before she went away. [She fastens the present in a conspicuous place on the tree.]

THE GRANDMOTHER. [Radiantly.] The Christ Child will sup with us tonight. [She leaves the room and CONSTANCE silently places three chairs about the table. THE GRANDMOTHER returns, carrying two chairs, one a child's chair.]

CONSTANCE. [With an exclamation of pain.] Grandmother, what wouldst thou do? Dost thou think I have a heart of stone? To see those empty chairs and that my Helene's little baby chair— Take them back to thy chamber, Grandmother. I am not stone.

THE GRANDMOTHER. Nay, I'll place them before Andrew's very eyes, and they will speak for Helene as thy own lips have never spoken.

CONSTANCE. He will be angry.

THE GRANDMOTHER. Thy love will melt his anger.

[There is a noise at the door.]

THE GRANDMOTHER. It is Andrew. Do thou open the door.

CONSTANCE. [Opening the door.] It is thee, Andrew. We are waiting. Give me thy great-coat, and do thou warm thyself. The night is cold. [AN-

DREW looks at her curiously. He removes his coat and hands it to her in silence.]

ANDREW. [*Gruffly, as she turns away with the coat.*] Wait. There is a gift in that pocket for the wife. [*He takes two packages from the pocket.*] And one for thee, Mother.

CONSTANCE. [*In pleased surprise.*] A gift for me, Andrew? Let me see it.

ANDREW. [*Abruptly.*] Nay, nay. I'll put it on the tree, and do thou bring the supper. [*He goes to the tree and places the gift upon it. The two women watch him eagerly. As he turns away he sees the gift CONSTANCE has placed. He stoops over and reads the greeting on the package. In his effort to conceal his emotion he turns in anger to his wife.*] Bring the supper, wife. I bade thee before.

THE GRANDMOTHER. Thy supper is ready, Andrew. We do but wait for thee. This long time have the candles been burning at the Christ Child's place. We wait for thee, Andrew. Place thou the chairs. May the Christ Child sup in this house tonight.

ANDREW. [*In angry tones, while he involuntarily goes nearer the child's chair.*] The chairs are about the table. Bring thou the supper, wife.

THE GRANDMOTHER. Andrew, wilt thou bar the Christ Child again tonight?

ANDREW. Again tonight? Bar the Christ Child again tonight. Has it not been the prayer and hope of all my Christmases that the Christ Child would come and sup with us?

THE GRANDMOTHER. Yea, before thy aged mother died. But thy lips did lie. Thou didst mock my hope. And then as now didst drive the Christ Child from thy door.

ANDREW. I did mock thy hope? I did drive the Christ Child from our door?

[CONSTANCE *has knelt at the Christ Child's place, her head bowed.*]

THE GRANDMOTHER. Thou hast, Andrew. Thou dost it now, and this the last Christmas I shall be with thee. Thou shuttest out the Christ Child who waits to sup here tonight. [*The young girl and the child again appear at the window.*] Come, Andrew, place the chairs. [*He goes reluctantly and brings the chairs to the table.* CONSTANCE *arises with a look of joy on her face. The door opens slowly. The three wait, expectant.*]

THE GRANDMOTHER. The Christ Child cometh.

[HELENE *softly enters the room.*]

CONSTANCE and GRANDMOTHER. It is Helene.

[HELENE *kneels at her father's feet. He lifts her gently and places her in her chair. The little child holds out its arms to him and smiles winsomely. ANDREW frowns angrily and draws back. The child comes nearer and holds out his arms more appealingly. ANDREW yields and takes the child in his arms. In his confusion he places the child in the Christ Child's place.*]

GRANDMOTHER. [*In awe.*] Andrew, it is in the Christ Child's place.

[*An effulgent light shines about the child. The three kneel in adoration.*]

A VOICE. Whosoever receiveth a little child in my name receiveth Me.

OUR LIBERTY THEATRES



WHEN the history of this war and its glorious dénouement shall have been written, some of its most interesting chapters will have to do with the miracle in army-building achieved by the United States Government in an incredibly short space of time and with results that astounded the military experts of every foreign country, especially that country which had devoted half a century to the creation and perfection of what was supposed to be the mightiest armed land array in the history of the world.

This American miracle in military organization and effectiveness depended largely upon the mental and spiritual as well as upon the physical conditions of the incomparable material at hand. No informed American ever doubted that the millions of available young soldiers and sailors had in them the stuff of which champions of liberty are made; but the big problem at the beginning was how to awake instantly, crystallize, and sustain that attitude and spirit of unconquerable devotion to the ideals with which we entered the war, in the hearts and minds of every man in uniform. That attitude and spirit is what we call the morale of individuals as well as of armies, of armies as well as of nations.

The Liberty Theatre, now in the full flower of its growth as a military institution, looms as the crowning success of the War Department's commission on training camp activities, of which Raymond B. Fosdick is chairman, and also as one of the chief agencies in the achievement of that miracle

which is now the peerless and unconquerable army that won the world's war for democracy on the battlefields of Europe. To those who glory in the amazing accomplishments of our already gigantic young military establishment, the ceaseless power for good exercised upon the young manhood of the nation by the Liberty Theatre will be instantly recognized and applauded; and for the vast majority of American men and women who prize the mental and spiritual welfare of their sons and brothers, and who cherish in their hearts a full realization of the potency of the gentle arts in the making of full-rounded men, there will be lasting and precious recognition of the suitability and high quality of the entertainments provided for the millions of soldiers in training and under arms by the Liberty Theatre of the United States War Department.

To those who love the theatre for its own sake as well as for its educative functions and its gracious power to sweeten life while it assails and routs the evil things and thoughts which lurk upon the fringe of peace as well as of war, there will be cause for rejoicing in the new access of understanding and approval which the Liberty Theatre has started and maintained in millions of American lads for the decent, the joyous, the wholesome, the inspiring things of the drama and the stage in all of its branches of entertainment and edification.

A glance at the list of bookings provided by the foremost theatrical managers of New York working in coöperation with the Liberty Theatre division of the military entertainment committee, will give an idea of the high class and generous variety of the programs offered in these playhouses of over thirty military training camps scattered from coast to coast across the United States. And there will be added

satisfaction for the civilian devotees of all that is best in the American theatre, to know that the young men for whom these salutary and uplifting "shows" have been provided, not only like them, but that they evince far more enthusiasm and intelligence in approval of them than would the same number of noncombatants under the ordinary conditions of peaceful communal life.

That is a point worth remembering in any effort to fix the value of the Liberty Theatre in the magical creation of our incomparable army of today. The entertainments offered are of the best, and the lads like them, applaud them, and want more of them. During the past year, in and about New York, I have visited many of these soldiers' playhouses. I have seen plays and companies from the foremost Broadway theatres, plays that the civilian public was glad to pay from \$1 to \$2.50 to see, playing to packed audiences of men in uniform who proved as exacting, as discriminating, and far more responsive than any assemblage of theatregoers in the cities could be.

George Arliss and his splendid company in *Hamilton* have expressed the opinion that, in courteous attention, keen discernment, and instant appreciation of a good play properly presented, no metropolitan audience can surpass one made up entirely of American soldiers. And David Warfield in *The Auctioneer*, a mighty favorite in all the Liberty Theatres, says that he will always cherish his enthusiastic reception in the soldiers' theatres as the finest compliment that has ever been paid to his art.

Another highly popular attraction at these camp playhouses is Mary Ryan in the gentle, sweetly domestic, and quietly patriotic little play *The Little Teacher*. And *Tiger Rose*, *Turn to the Right*, *The Country Cousin*, *It Pays to Advertise*, *Charlie's*

Aunt, and *Polly with a Past* are a few others of the long list of stage attractions which have delighted and diverted the millions of our soldiers-in-the-making within the past year.

Grand opera, musical comedy, operettas, concerts, recitals, clean farces, minstrel shows, and even a one-ring circus dot the successive series of good things which follow one another at every American military training camp which is fortunate enough to possess a Liberty theatre. There is nothing haphazard, nothing is left to chance, in the selection of the attractions booked for these camps. Under the close scrutiny of Chairman Malcolm L. McBride and Director J. Howard Reber, and others of the military entertainment committee, coöperating with a committee of leading New York theatrical managers of which Daniel Frohman is the chairman, every play or act booked for the Liberty Theatres is carefully selected, every performer is put under the regulations of the War Department, and throughout the training camp tour of such attractions reports are made of each performance, so that no undesirable changes in the play, the dialogue, or the personnel of the casts can be made either by accident or design.

Modern theatres perfectly equipped with regulation stages, scenery, curtains, lighting, dressing-rooms, and seating facilities, with expert resident managers and a full quota of house attachés appointed by the camp commandant, are now in full operation at Camps Custer, Devens, Dix, Dodge, Gordon, Grant, Lee, Cody, Bowie, Beauregard, Doniphan, Funston, Greene, Hancock, Kelly Field, Logan, McArthur, Wadsworth, Wheeler, and McClellan, and at every one of them the regimental bands eagerly promote attendance by bally-hoo parades through the reservation before the performance and

by performing as the orchestra in the theatre itself when the doors are opened.

The systematic and sequential booking of all these Liberty Theatres is carried on with the same, or even greater, precision which characterizes the engagement and routing of attractions for city theatres, and in all of this work the leading theatrical managers of New York, from the first, have coöperated generously, not only in sending their own attractions around, but in avoiding that bane of the professional showman's life—a dark theatre. As a result, there are few dark nights in the more than thirty Liberty Theatres, and even where the professional visitors fail to show up—a rare occurrence—the “pep squad” of trained soldier-amateurs are always ready to stage an impromptu show of their own. And that's another story.

Given, then, commodious, warm, well-lighted and perfectly appointed Liberty Theatres, how are the audiences provided, how are the expenses met, what are the costs of the patrons of the houses, and what provisions are made so that the most benefit shall accrue to the greatest number of soldiers? Successful efforts to answer all of these essential requirements have been made. A minimum charge of 25 cents and a maximum of 50 cents is made for admission. This enables a large percentage of the men in camp to enjoy an entire evening of first-class entertainment at a very small cash outlay. But many, perhaps most, of the men can't afford or utterly lack even the required “two bits” that would let them into the happy gatherings. Dependents at home, delayed payrolls, smoking necessities, and other drains keep the purses of the majority of young soldiers pitifully flat.

In order to take care of these expectant and appre-

ciative lads, the War Department hit upon the plan of issuing what is called Smileage—coupon-books containing from four to twenty admission tickets to Liberty Theatres. These have been placed on sale in thousands of city cigar stores and circulated through the continuous and unselfish work of the Stage Woman's War Relief and hundreds of patriotic volunteers eager to keep their heroes smiling, and determined that in the matter of camp entertainment and healthy recreation, their sons, brothers, fathers, and sweethearts shall get everything that is coming to them.

De Hull N. Travis, director of the department of publicity of the Liberty Theatre Division, has directed his ceaseless energy to the sale and dissemination of Smileage, and throughout the winter has continued the campaign to keep Liberty Theatre tickets in the hands of every soldier in training in the scores of camps and cantonments of the entire nation. In his now famous speech "The Joys of War," delivered before the New Hampshire Manufacturers' Association, the Ohio Retail Lumber Dealers' Association, the Rotary Clubs of Toledo, Detroit, Boston, Chicago, Newark, New York, and other cities, and before the Illinois Bankers' Association and scores of churches, lyceums, clubs, and social organizations, Mr. Travis said: "One important task of the commission on training camp activities is to reestablish, as far as possible, the home entertainment ties—to furnish the men in camps a substitute for the recreational entertainment and amusement opportunities to which they have been accustomed. The chief smile-producing, worry-forgetting, and generally helpful medium to rationalize the new environment of a camp is found in the Liberty Theatres."

A sophisticated and observant civilian whose sons are both in the service, having visited the Liberty Theatre at Camp Merritt, said: "The thing I saw last night has given me the greatest thrill in years. I caught the spirit of the men in khaki. I saw the show through their eyes. I laughed with them, sang with them, and pounded my fists in unison with their mighty applause. I too was lonesome and away from home. The contagion of the thing swept me into the full tide of their enthusiasm. I found myself instinctively cheering at the close of a catchy song, and I was more than once on the point of thumping a neighboring private on the back in hearty commendation of something that pleased the elemental man within me. Now, in my critical moments, I know that the show I saw out there was just ordinary, but when there I was drawn into the collective personality of that hilarious unit. I saw beauty coloring the monotony; feminine charm to offset and subdue the accustomed brute strength of the mass; laughter, jests, and song to banish for a brief while the loneliness and the intolerable monotony of a soldier's life. And during the evening there was tender sentiment on the bill which, under other circumstances, might seem mawkish, but here it only called to the surface the hidden emotion that a strong man will bury in his heart under the assumed indifference of a harsh exterior. For a while last night these men forgot drill, uncomfortable bunkhouses, weariness, and the enemy they are being trained to kill. They found a shoulder-to-shoulder companionship in the friendly informality of the meeting and a relaxation in the community singing.

"And they left without sacrificing any of their self-respect," he concluded. "It was a clean show. They had seen and heard young ladies who might

easily have been their sisters, doing their bit to add a little cheer and bring a little color into the lives of a set of men away from home and hungry for the human touch and refining influence of feminine charm. And when it was all over, they filed out in orderly fashion, showing in their bearing that they bore the utmost respect for the whole institution."

The occasional civilian who is permitted to witness a Liberty Theatre audience of soldiers witnessing a typical Liberty Theatre show, invariably becomes a steady investor in Smileage. But it is not possible for many to enjoy such a privilege, and Mr. Travis and his assistants have not diminished their efforts to interest the patriotic public in buying Smileage and mailing the small books of tickets as the most welcome and most useful gift that can be sent to a soldier in training. Mrs. Basil Clarke, a Belgian countess by marriage, and with two sons in the service of the Allies, is adding interest to many meetings of industrial, religious, and social organizations where Smileage is the topic, by her vivid recital of the Belgian invasion. She was living in Brussels when the first eight hundred thousand Germans swept down upon the devoted country of her adoption, and in her campaign in behalf of the Liberty Theatre, Mrs. Clarke is able to recount from her own experiences in the war camps and hospitals of Belgium and Northern France the priceless value of wholesome and inspiring entertainment in the vital business of maintaining the morale of fighting men at the highest and best.

In its conduct of the now extensive Liberty Theatre circuit, the War Department has evolved a system by which the very finest quality and greatest diversity of clean entertainment shall be given at a cost no greater than that derived from the sale of admis-

sion tickets and Smileage. Thus, every dollar received through the sale of the coupon books is applied to the maintenance of the Liberty Theatres. The extremely low minimum cost of these shows, their artists, transportation, and current expenses, together with the overhead charges of heating, lighting, and manning the camp playhouse, is made possible by the fact that neither the visiting dramatic and operatic companies, nor any of the artists appearing, nor any of the owners or managers of such attractions make any profit out of the camp engagements or get any money except the exact cost of the production.

To the unselfishly generous coöperation of the great theatrical producers and managers, as well as to the hundreds of artists engaged on this Liberty Theatre circuit, much of the cumulative success of the system is due. The Government has "gone into the show business" in an ideal and yet practical way. Not for profit to anyone except its soldiers, not to the individual or collective aggrandizement of any selfish agency, but for the high entertaining and educative values, for the big and growing patriotism of its selected sons, the United States has adopted and successfully applied all that the theatre and the stage have to offer for making and keeping the high morale which has been manifested already and which is the truth and the life of our miraculous army.

JOHN H. RAFTERY.

THE GARDEN

A One-Act Play in Verse

by

FLORENCE KIPER FRANK

THE CHARACTERS

THE GIRL

THE MAN

THE LOVER

THE BOY

THE SPRITE

THE PRESENCE

The scene is a garden. This garden is patterned much as are other gardens of distinction done by the modern artists of landscape. It is beautiful, colorful, of a right symmetry and proportion.—A semi-circular white stone bench, terraced,—Greek in simplicity and sweep of line—is in its center. Near this, a low stone fountain brims with water. Two pillars flank the bench, one on either side, and behind it curves a dark-green hedge of ilex. There is an arrangement of shrubs and bushes at the right; there are flower-beds, impressionistic in color-scheme, in the foreground, and in the background two dark, straight trees. A garden-wall of boulders stretches straight across the stage at the back—above it can be seen the sky.

The curtain rises to discover A GIRL, of perhaps seventeen years, seated upon the terraced bench, with closed eyes and relaxed hands, in an attitude of young slumber. She is in a white silk dress, of a small Pompadour pattern. The gown is simple

in design, quaint, with rounded neck and puffed sleeves, the short skirt revealing the low satin slippers and ankles silk-stockinged.

There is no sound for a few moments other than the rhythmic brimming of the fountain. The light is white, pale, and catches the water. Then suddenly out of nowhere, as if it were perhaps the garden itself speaking, A VOICE pronounces these words:

A garden is this?
Or is it a young girl's Soul?
Symbols, perchance!
Yet dreams have their own realities.
I shall leave it to you,
To know the essential meaning.

The VOICE dies to nothingness. The orchestra begins its prelude, which is built on the themes to follow. Accompanying the orchestral themes is what may be termed a Symphony of Lights. This symphony shall be manipulated with delicacy, subtlety, and brilliant assurance. For as with the musical themes, so with the lighting, each variation and motif shall portray a psychic mood—a state of consciousness having its own dominant lighting and the variations thereof.

Throughout this prelude THE GIRL still sleeps, half concealed by the dim light. At its close she wakes, quietly, opening her eyes as might a child refreshed. She stirs from the garden seat, she descends, and softly—to herself—her footsteps measuring the space before the bench, she chants.

THE GIRL.

One—two—three—four,
Up and down my garden close,
Where the white-heart lily sways,
Redly shines the rose.

A pleasant thing is a garden close.—
One—two—but the world is wide!
And O but I fear the windy world!
In my garden shall I abide.

Three—four—but the world is wide,
The world is a wide and a shining place,
And my boots are set to my little feet,
And over the world I'll pace.

[*The lyric ends on a gesture of eagerness, THE GIRL a-tiptoe with expectation. At this moment there leaps over the wall, precipitately, THE LOVER—The Romantic Lover. He is garbed much as is the conventionalized artist of the drawings—the velveteen jacket, the flowing tie. He is young, vivid. He folds her in his arms, conquering. She yields herself to him. The light has become brighter, more golden.*

She throws back her head and gazes at him with the triumphant delight of the woman loved. They speak in a cadenced rapture.]

THE GIRL.

My lover!

THE LOVER.

Beloved!

THE GIRL.

From far shores you came

To gather me thus.

THE LOVER.

The leaping joy!

THE GIRL.

The shame

Delicious!

THE LOVER.

Iseult, Elaine, Penelope,
Golden Deirdre!—nay, but you are she
That fired the topless towers and launched the
ships
White-winged—

THE GIRL.

Ah, those fathomless eyes!

THE LOVER.

Your lips

Again—

THE GIRL.

Will it ever be thus, do you think,—
You loving and I loved?

THE LOVER.

I sway on the brink
Of a great madness!—yes, eternally.

THE GIRL [*as with arms about each other, they pass
around and behind the ilex hedge*]:

Over the world has come my lover to me,
Over the world and over the tossing sea,
Into my garden he comes for the fruiting dear.
My lover is here!

[*They disappear behind the hedge. To an empty scene, the orchestra takes up the Sprite music—expressive of the gleeful, the irrepressible, the madly wanton and childish spirit in Nature.*

During this interlude, THE SPRITE parts the bushes to look out warily, then hops upon the stage—a small and delightful girl figure, hair loose, feet bare, her gown of tattered green. She has girdled herself with flowers. In her hands she bears colored balls, blue, orange, and crimson. These she tosses into the air and plays with wantonly, following them, when they roll along the ground, with

swift and pouncing movements. After the interlude, to the accompaniment of the tossing balls, she sings:]

THE SPRITE.

Hi-yi-ki-yi—

Up, up, up to the sky!

See, see, but the sky is high.

We dance, we dance in the growing grasses!

What is life but a wind that passes!

Hi—yi for the growing grasses!

The clouds go bumping along the sky.

Up, up, for the sky is high!

Yet we'll hit that sky at another try.

[At the close of the song, THE GIRL, as if irresistibly drawn, comes running out, alone, from behind the hedge. She has shed lightly her emotion of love. She has become again the child, demanding the eagerness of swift motion and the delights of irresponsibility. She rushes at THE SPRITE, catches her hands, and together they circle about, wildly. After a mad whirl they release each other. Each continues dancing alone.]

THE SPRITE. *[Almost breathless.]*

Dance, dance in the wind!

THE GIRL.

I'll dance till the sun comes

tumbling

Into the brook!

THE SPRITE. *[Running to her, whispers.]*

The grasses today are mumbling

Wild matters among themselves.

THE GIRL. *[Bewildered by a sudden thought.]*

Saw you my lover?

THE SPRITE. *[Wilfully ignoring.]*

I saw the sunlight but an instant hover—
Then split to a thousand beams!

THE GIRL.

But saw you him,

Ardent—

THE SPRITE.

Look now, it was on the brim
Of day, a far-away place, unknown to you.
Wings one must have to go there.

THE GIRL.

He'll be true

Eternally—he says so!

THE SPRITE. [*Stamping her foot—and pushing THE
GIRL from her, pettishly.*]

What a bore!

You're tiresome to me, too. Go away!—And
before

You were just mischief!—

THE GIRL. [*As from a height of age.*]

Ah, you're but a child!

[*They have turned from each other, in anger. But
THE SPRITE, who cannot long contain so human
an emotion, again overbeams with gladness. She
swings about, holding out her hands to THE GIRL,
tossing back her head, smilingly, with irresistible
lure.*]

THE SPRITE.

Dance with me again!

THE GIRL. [*Hesitating.*]

I—

THE SPRITE.

See! you've only smiled
Solemn-eyed! But laugh now—laugh—laugh!
[*She goes off into peals of laughter.*]

O I could choke
With laughter!—Isn't it a joke
To laugh at nothing!

THE GIRL. [*Looking out, as if in a dream.*]

He was but a phantom,

That lover of mine!

THE SPRITE. [*In abandoned and grotesque imitation.*]

Kk—kk—kk—I'm a bantam

Strutting the barnyard!

THE GIRL. [*Yielding, with peals of mirth.*]

I'm a little lame duck,

Yellow as butter—

THE SPRITE.

I'm after you—cluckety-cluck!

[*They run about, with funny little hops and pounces. They catch hands and circle again, singing:*]

We dance, we dance in the growing grasses!

What is life but a wind that passes!

Hi—yi for the growing grasses!

[*The orchestra develops the Sprite music to a climax of gaiety and brilliance. The lighting also reaches its climax. But at the final chord the stage is dramatically and suddenly drenched with a green-blue darkness, ominous and unpleasant. A faint odor, of a peculiar pungency, is released.*]

THE SPRITE races off, with expedition. THE GIRL sinks to the bench, shuddering in terror, covering her face with her hands.

The left-hand pillar lights, to reveal for an instant therein the figure of a dark-cloaked man. The light goes out—flashes on again. The man is this time more plainly revealed in the unpleasantly glowing pillar. He is tall, lean, and enveloped in a purple, loose-flowing cloak.

He steps from the pillar, which becomes dark. He moves over quietly to THE GIRL, who has not uncovered her eyes. He stands softly by her. When he speaks, it is with a deadly and sneering assurance, cold as a dagger-thrust.]

THE MAN.

Look at me!

THE GIRL.

No!

THE MAN. [*Pulling down her hands.*]

Look at me, demoiselle!

THE GIRL. [*In piteous bravado.*]

I will. I'm not afraid.

THE MAN.

Then why rebel?

THE GIRL.

I—

THE MAN.

Yet you desire me?

THE GIRL. [*Most emphatically.*]

No!

THE MAN. [*Subtly.*]

You desire me here

That you may say, "I have no desire!"

THE GIRL. [*Tortured.*]

I fear

You! I fear you!

THE MAN. [*Suavely.*]

Shall I go?

THE GIRL.

Y—yes!

THE MAN.

You hesitate!

THE GIRL. [*Uncertainly.*]

I must know

You—

THE MAN.

'Tis the mystery that lures.

She'll have none of me. I'm anathema. She
assures

Me every night of that—yet—in the night
Things are—how shall I say it?—perhaps not
quite

So simple as in the calmer light of day.

Maidenly, she desires me away,

And yet— [*With a smile.*]

THE GIRL. [*Springing up.*]

O, I could kill you!

THE MAN. [*With a flourish, he presents a small
weapon.*]

Here's the dagger!

Strike at me hard! You know, I don't even stagger
When I'm stabbed to the heart. Just fall and lie
there dead

And then the deliverance of the virgin bed

From hateful dreams—

THE GIRL. [*With a shudder.*]

A-aah!

THE MAN.

So desired an end

'Twere well to consummate. Come, my lovely
friend,

My lovely, lovely girl-friend! A young girl
Is Nature's fragrant flower, an innocent pearl
Set gleaming in the dark heart of the world,
A white flame on the Lord's altar, an uncurled
Still banner of the Lord—

THE GIRL. [*Brokenly.*]

You torture me! Why?

[*She drops the dagger, which falls clatteringly.*]

I cannot kill you! Perhaps I can die
Myself.

THE MAN.

Yet that is so oozy and wormy—
To be under the ground, eaten by white things
squirmy,
Dank, crawly, twisty—! Then the nuisance, too,
Of being blotted out, unable to view
One's own demise—no, perish the thought. Now I
Am not so bad, if you would only try
Not to despise me utterly. I'm young,
I have a gracious and a ready tongue,
And then [*Very near her.*] —I love you! I love
you!

THE GIRL. [*Stifling a scream.*]

Ah!

THE MAN. [*Seizing her in his arms.*]

I want you!

And you have need of me—need!—I taunt you
But in jest—

[*His words are tense and rapid. He has fastened her arms to her side in his embrace. She struggles to free herself. Despairingly she looks about for succour, and sees, standing by the right-hand pillar, THE LOVER, who has appeared with phantom-like suddenness and quietness.*]

THE GIRL. [*On a sob.*]

He shall deliver me, my Lover!

THE MAN. [*Springing away from her—he says mock-heroically.*]

A Galahad to the rescue! Wings that hover!

[*The two men then engage in a sort of burlesque combat or wrestling match, to the accompaniment of the music. Their figures rock back and forth over the stage, the chords accenting the semi-grotesque movements. THE GIRL stands upon the terrace,*

her hands clasped, body tense, watching in realest anxiety the issue. After a few moments they release each other, and THE MAN, with a sweeping bow, presents himself before her.]

THE MAN.

He cannot down me!—What next, prithee? wound me?

Torture me, hang me, boil me, skin me, drown me?

THE GIRL. [*Piteously—to THE LOVER.*]

You cannot rescue me?

THE LOVER. [*Grandiloquently—making a pass at THE MAN.*]

I'll smother him yet.

THE MAN. [*Over his shoulder—as they again grapple.*]

He has no ardent desire to, sweet pet!

[*To the accompaniment of the chords, the wrestling-match proceeds—when, from the wings, steps forth THE BOY, a lad of about eighteen, well-set-up, sun-burned, his outing costume correct and conventional, a likable figure of conforming American youth. As he moves toward the center of the stage, the other two men rock off to the right, clasped in each other's arms.*]

THE BOY'S manner is nonchalant and unconcerned—
THE GIRL'S, on beholding him, one of almost hysterical relief.]

THE BOY.

How are you, Muriel? Isn't this rather a damp Place to be sitting?

[*The aspect of The Garden is at this moment indeed depressing, but the light soon grows brighter, and the following scene is played for the most part with a white lighting that is clear and steady.*]

THE GIRL. [*On a sobbing breath.*]
Dick!

THE BOY.

Who was that scamp

Wrestling with the æsthetic fellow?

THE GIRL.

O Dick,

How good to have you here! My soul is sick
Almost to swooning.

THE BOY. [*Dipping water from fountain.*]
Quaff a bit of this,

Dripping and pure!

[*She drinks. He watches her with pleasure.*]

Ah, metamorphosis!

The color mounts. She's Muriel once more.

THE GIRL. [*With eagerness.*]

And all things are just as they were before—
That's true, that's true, isn't it?

THE BOY.

But surely!

And you don't wish to talk of—them? I've a
purely

Comradely curiosity. Let's change
The subject.

THE GIRL. [*Breathlessly.*]

Yes!—I must rearrange

My hair.

[*And she proceeds to do so, her hair having
become tumbled in the struggle.*]

THE BOY. [*Critically.*]

D'ye ever wear it high?

THE GIRL. [*With laughing facility.*]

I haven't, Dick. Do you like it so? I'll try.—
See!—

THE BOY.

Crickey! You've a lovely profile.

Most girls, you know, haven't.—So it goes—and
so—pile

It a little higher just on top! Now stick
It full of pins so it won't tumble!

[*Her soft hair is now delightfully piled on the
top of her head, the tendrils curling about
her flushed face. She sits leaning toward
him.*]

THE GIRL.

Dick!

What times we've had together!

THE BOY.

Rather!

THE GIRL.

That night

When the moon was rounded—the skating!—the
swoop and flight

In the bend—

THE BOY.

That jolly afternoon

Tramping!—your birthday party!—

THE GIRL.

The croon

Of voices over water!—the little ways
Of foolishness and fun!—but now my days
Are staid and very sober—

[*At a gesture of protest from him.*]

Yes! O yes!

And I shall wear a proper, grown-up dress
At the next party—

THE BOY.

Don't! I like you best

In the little, frilly things!

THE GIRL. [*Dreamily, uncertainly.*]

But all the rest

Say that I'm older—and some day I shall marry,

And— What do you think of life, Dick? Do they
 harry
 You sometimes—thoughts?

THE BOY. [*With certainty.*]
 No!

THE GIRL.

Often I'm in a cloud
 Of thoughts! I can't get through them! and they
 shroud
 Strange lanes and avenues—and the world slips
 Under my feet. Have you stood on the world
 when it dips,
 Buoyant, into the sunset, like a huge balloon
 Riding the currents?—And then the golden swoon
 Of thoughts at high noon-tide, when the air swarms
 With waves of—of sunlight and wonder, and there
 forms
 Sudden, out of nothing, the flame-like thought of
 life,
 Till, woven through to the finger-tips, I'm rife
 With little pulling desires exquisite—

THE BOY. [*Uneasily.*]
 You can't but become queer, Muriel, if you sit
 In these weird gardens, lonely.

THE GIRL. [*Laughingly.*]
 O you boy,
 You nice, correct, straight Dicky!—not hobbled-
 hoy
 Longer—but O so right in everything.
 There, it's all passed now!—What shall we do?
 shall we sing
 Shall we golf? shall we dance? That's a jolly
 little song
 Made out of footsteps as they pat along
 In the one-step.

[*They here do a dance, the music and the steps of which are built on the insistent and primitive rhythms of the modern one-step. The dance has greater abandon, however, more variation, and a somewhat finer grace. It is the dance of American youth, zestful, irreverent, spirited, its erotic significance merged and sublimated in the delights of swift motion.*

During the final whirl of the dance, the figure of a woman in her young maturity—a woman of about thirty—appears in the background. She is gowned in a loose-flowing robe, a variation of the Greek costume, the color of which—pale yellow—is the symbol of spiritual aspiration. Her mien and her gestures are of a noble serenity. A band of gleaming gold fillets her hair and another band girdles her.

At the close of the dance, as THE GIRL apprehends THE PRESENCE, the music dies, and there is a silence. THE GIRL's mood changes utterly. The light becomes a soft blue.]

THE GIRL.

Nobly she stands—

THE PRESENCE.

I summon you again

From little desires, and from the ways of men,
Profiting nothing, to that cloudless sphere
Of large endeavour, to the ambient clear,
The windless radiance of high mountain peaks.

THE GIRL.

I follow you, rejoicing. Now there speaks,
Like bells, full-throated, the soul—and peace comes
flooding
Like to beneficence. There is a white budding
And burgeoning within me—

THE BOY.

I had best be going!

[He effaces himself quietly, disappearing into the wings. The orchestra then takes up the musical theme which accompanies the following scene.]

THE GIRL.

All that was wild, confused, is now a glowing
Clearness of fire.

THE PRESENCE.

Spherical swells the meaning!

THE GIRL.

Out of the heavens there is a rush and leaning
Of arching wings—

THE PRESENCE.

Infinity entreats you!

THE GIRL.

I give myself! I am consecrate!

THE PRESENCE.

There greets you

A choiring—

THE GIRL.

Lost are the early voices!

THE PRESENCE.

This is the joy of the Lord.

THE GIRL.

My soul rejoices

Like to a dancer moving to rapt paces.

THE PRESENCE.

There comes a streaming out of sunlit spaces—

THE GIRL.

A flowing, an ecstasy—

[The words are here lost and merged in the music, which carries the mood of religious

rapture to its climax. The lighting is also climactic.

Then appears from the bushes THE SPRITE, a bit wearily, somewhat bedraggled. Softly she sings to herself, tossing her balls very quietly this time:]

Hi—yi—yi—yi,
Up, up, up to the sky!
Ah me, but the sky is high!

We dance, we dance in the growing grasses.
What is life but a wind that passes!
Hi—yi—for the growing grasses.

[The lighting has become subtly modified to include The Sprite theme. The music is the original Sprite music, with the introduction of slight dissonance. At the appearance of THE SPRITE, THE PRESENCE has moved to the background, where she stands motionless, but entirely apparent, during the following scene. THE GIRL stands center, half inclined to THE SPRITE, yet by no means yielding herself. The speeches of THE SPRITE are accompanied by boisterous and frolicsome imitative gestures.]

THE SPRITE.

Hi—yi! hi—yi! the grasses today are mumbling,
Stirring and fumbling—and the little green frogs
are tumbling

Head-foremost into the pond—creek-bumpety-
bump!

The leaves go pattering—and really there isn't a
stump

Where the mushrooms aren't yellow—green-
yellow and red!

And it's rumored, besides, that the moon has a
pain in her head.

So there'll be crazy doings tonight! But I don't
care—I!

Scudding, the clouds will go, scudding around,
around the sky!

I'll ride on a cloud that's shaped like a camel's
back,

'Til it melts to a galleon. A camel goes rackety-
rack,

Rackety-rackety—ha-ha!—rackety-rack!

THE PRESENCE.

From little desires and from the ways of men

I summon you—

THE SPRITE.

But I shan't wait until then.

I'd as lief ride a beetle as a cloud. Whir—whirety
—whir,

That's the way it moves—and there isn't a stir
In the air that it doesn't hear, and veer to and
wheel to,

And dance to and prance to and lunge to and
plunge to and wheel to,

I on its back become tiny as the tiniest fly—

THE PRESENCE.

Out of eternity there swells a high

Summons—

THE SPRITE.

Come dance with me now in the grasses!
Shadows are fun to dance to!

[*The sun darkens for an instant, and
THE SPRITE is touched by a strange
emotion.*]

A shadow passes
Over the sun!— Quickly, quickly, while the sun
rides high!

Some day They'll be minded to pull that sun out
of the sky,

And then—

[THE SPRITE is bewildered. She has caught at a thread which she is incapable of following. But THE GIRL questions her with a serious intentness.]

THE GIRL.

And then?—

THE SPRITE.

Ho, ho! listen to the waves

Lapping, slapping, lapping! There are green little
caves

Underneath, and pink and red monsters—but I'd
sooner ride on top,

Where the sunlight breaks and goes splintering—
flip—floppetty—flop,

Floppetty—floppetty—flip—flip—floppetty—flop!

[The light darkens to that of night. A full and humid
moonlight is seen. THE SPRITE and THE PRESENCE
merge into the background and disappear. THE
LOVER again leaps over the wall.]

THE LOVER.

Beloved, I am come to you now to fulfill
The promise of our ardor! We shall spill
The brimming cup. We shall scatter to the breezes
Petals, white petals, riotous. There seizes
Us both a high wind of destiny. Compelling
Is the urge thereof. The heavens tonight are
spelling

Secrets of flame upon the darkness. White
Blazes the glory of the stars. The night
Is fluid, vibrant—

THE GIRL. [Apart.]

Shall I know the meaning?

The spirit roams afar and has strange gleaning.
Breathless it waits—

THE LOVER. [*Vivid.*]

An ecstasy shall sweep you
 Into the drift of the worlds. What shall you reap,
 you
 The white spirit!—Crimson is the flooding.
 This now, the wildness of the blood, [*He seizes her,*
yielding.] the thudding
 At the temples! the swift rapture of embraces—

THE GIRL.

Darkly are we whirled into the mystic places!
 Shall I know—

[*Within the pillar, which is suddenly alight,*
 THE GIRL sees the figure of THE MAN. *She*
gives a stifled scream.]

Ah! [*The light goes out.*]

THE LOVER. [*Who has not seen.*]

Again your lips, your hair!

THE GIRL. [*Tearing herself from him.*]

Out of my heart shall I pluck it bleeding—there
 The crimson flower—

[*From the other pillar, which lights,*
steps THE PRESENCE.]

THE PRESENCE.

A fuller ardor waits you.

Love, the celestial flooding, consecrates you.

THE GIRL.

What deeds? what knowledge?

THE PRESENCE.

You shall follow hither
 And yon the urge—high causes, bodies that wither,
 Redemption—

[*The figure of THE LOVER disappears. THE*
SPRITE comes out from the bushes.]

THE SPRITE. [*Gently—eerily.*]

Up, up, up to the sky!
So far away! The sky is too high!
We shall hop with the little frogs, you and I.

We dance, we dance in the growing grasses!
Life—pouf!—is a wind that passes.
Dance with me, dance in the growing grasses.

[*THE GIRL is suddenly pierced by the consciousness of her rejection of THE LOVER. Madly she beats with her fists at the left-hand pillar.*]

THE GIRL.

He is gone! my lover is gone, is gone from me!

[*The pillar lights. But instead of THE LOVER there is seen therein the ominous figure of THE MAN. THE GIRL starts back in dismay.*]

THE MAN.

—Over the world and over the beating sea!
Call to your lover to come to the fruiting dear.
[*Pointing to himself.*] Your lover is here!
[*The pillar again darkens.*]

THE GIRL. Ah no! no! He shall come again to me!

[*There then begins a whirling of lights, through which may be descried, dimly and as in an incoherent dream, THE GIRL, the dancing SPRITE, THE PRESENCE. The lights whirl faster, more furiously—to the accompaniment of the music. Finally out of the confusion emerge the figures of THE BOY and THE GIRL, in their dance. This dance begins as did the first dance, but it too grows wild and incoherent.*]

Then suddenly the changing lights and the music cease, and THE GIRL, alone, is on the stage,

center. A direct lighting illumines her. The rest of the stage is in blackness.

THE GIRL stands a-tiptoe, one hand to her heart. She looks out dreamily. Then softly she murmurs:]

THE GIRL.

What am I? Where?—
Is it phantasmagoria?—
A garden is this,
Or is it the essential soul?—
How shall I know?
How shall I question the meaning?
To dance were better,
To dance, to dance in the wind!

[*Her moving arms have already begun to feel the rhythm of the dance. But suddenly they drop to her side. A more concrete emotion has perturbed her.*]

But ah, my lover!—
When shall he return to me!
When shall he return to me!
My lover!—my lover!—

[*The blackness is paling. Gradually there spreads the same white and mystic lighting as possessed the stage at the beginning of the scene. THE GIRL turns, walks slowly to the garden-seat, and softly—to herself—her footsteps, measuring the space before the bench, she chants:*]

THE GIRL.

One—two—three—four,
Up and down my garden close,
Where the white-heart lily sways,
Redly shines the rose.

A pleasant thing is a garden close—
One—two—but the world is wide!
And O but I fear the windy world!
In my garden shall I abide.

Three—four—but the world is wide!
The world is a wide and a shining place,
And my boots are set to my little feet,
And over the world I'll pace!

[*The lyric ends on the same gesture of eagerness as at the beginning. THE GIRL turns toward the garden-wall. There is heard the rhythmic brimming of the fountain. The curtain descends slowly.*]

MUSIC IN PAGEANTRY



ALL human life has two appeals, (1) to the regard of the feelings, (2) to the interest of the intellect. So all art plays delightedly over the right proportioning of these two elements. Of the single arts, probably Music addresses itself more than any of the others to the feelings. It is supremely the art of the emotions. Drama is a composite art, combining in itself at least the two arts of language and of visualization, frequently others as well. But Pageantry is always composite, adding almost always the arts of music and of motion to the minimum synthesis of the drama.

It is necessary, however, in order to avoid error, to distinguish clearly between the various art-forms which are commonly grouped under the name of Pageantry. The Pageant, the Masque, and the Festival have been discriminately recognized as distinct forms and have been tentatively defined by the American Pageant Association.* Reference may also be made to a discussion of these and other forms in an address delivered at the Massachusetts Agricultural College and printed in *THE DRAMA*.** There the Pageant is shown to be essentially historical in character; the Masque essentially philosophical; and the Festival essentially lyrical. According as

* See American Pageant Association: Bulletin No. 53 on Terminology.

** See *The Drama Quarterly Review*, No. 27, August, 1917, page 404, *Compass Points in the Festal Drama*, by William Chauncy Langdon.

the character of these forms varies, so will vary the task of the Music in the production, and the principles and expediences of the musical treatment thereof. In the address just referred to another form is distinguished, the School-Play, defined as educational in essential character, which is spreading very rapidly over the country owing to the great service it is able to render to the vitalizing of education. For this part of the field Mr. Chubb and his coworkers of the Ethical Culture School, New York, have given us a real book, thorough and sound in its theory, experienced in its judgment and knowledge, and practical in its suggestion.* In this the music is treated by Peter W. Dykema, now of the University of Wisconsin, who has in mind the community value of music, which is the focus of all his work.

The personal equation is an inescapable element in all analysis and criticism as in all synthesis. That same individual determinant which necessitates in the making of the big coast defense guns that the same individual man take all the measurements of the successive jackets as the gun is constructed controls all thinking and writing. This is a commonplace truth and might well be considered to require no pronouncement. The fundamental character of the personal equation Matthew Arnold permanently expressed for us in his "The style is the man." But in the present subject, the point must be insisted upon. Such is the indiscriminating thoughtlessness with which it is generally assumed that the whole field of Pageantry is pretty much alike, that a pro-

* Percival Chubb and Associates: *Festivals and Plays*. Harper & Brothers, 1912. The educational, cultural and recreational aspects of the Festival are treated by Mr. Chubb; music by Mr. Dykema; art by James Hall; costuming by Marie R. Perrin; dancing by Mary G. Allerton; and first steps by Mabel Ray Goodlander.

nunciamento is required. Pageantry is a very polymorphous region. A marked instinct for the book business does not in itself argue a similar special adaptability for the coal business; nor vice versa. Neither does a predilection for the Pageant of itself argue an instinctive talent for the Masque, the Festival or the School-Play; nor vice versa. Accordingly, the practical value of this article and of its suggestions depends to an important degree upon the clear understanding of the fact that it is written from the standpoint of one most of whose work has been in the Pageant (in the stricter sense of the word), only to a minor extent in the Masque and Mystery, and not at all in the School Play. Still it may be that more or less of suggestion may be found in the experience herein summarized for the other types of work, and with that hope these suggestions are offered.

Music is of course either specially composed for the production, or it is adapted. It is best to have the music composed to fit the dramatic idea throughout its development. Music is not at all generally similar, all alike. For some people music seems to be chiefly a stimulating accompaniment for conversation, a beautiful substratum above which the human voice is ever to rise higher and higher in exultant supremacy; to these people all music is essentially alike, any music will do for the contest. But in the true creative use, creating the distinct atmosphere of a dramatic action, no two musical works, no two musical passages are alike; there can be no substitution of one for another, except it be in reliance on the ignorance and deafness to distinctive musical character of the participants and the audience. Music is a language, with which people may say things. The dramatist does not expect to achieve

fine effects by simply turning loose a stream of English, irrespective of any definite meaning in the words, even though English is a very wonderful language. Neither should anyone expect to achieve any finer effect by simply turning loose into the dramatic synthesis a stream of music, irrespective of the meaning that is actually expressed by the phrases, chords, and sequences of that very wonderful language.

Again, approach the matter from the practical standpoint. All music may roughly be divided into good and bad, and into available and unavailable. No one wants the bad music, whether available or unavailable. The good music that is available is apt already to have its definite associations to a large part of the audience, and a serious handicap, to say the least, is incurred by its use. It is of no use to play the best known march in Lohengrin, for every one will see brides all around, and nothing but brides; furthermore they will not be brides in the costume of the opera for which the march was composed, but in the lovely wedding gowns and orange blossoms of our own day and generation. It is of no use to sing the beautiful old carol, *The Seven Joys of Mary*, least of all in church. A pernicious and illegitimate association will quicken up the time and intrude humorous imprecations upon the man who hath plenty of good peanuts and giveth his neighbor none. These are of course extreme illustrations, but they clearly mark out a principle that governs all borrowed use of music, and the difficulty might as well be recognized from the start. At best you are not saying quite what you want to say; the best that can be hoped for is something that will do, which is in itself a confession that really it will not do at all. Thaddeus Fairbanks, the inventor of the platform

scale, said that scales must be right, if they were only all right they were not right at all. There is doubtless good music which is not yet encumbered with associations, but this music is unavailable, and so out of the question. The motive behind the use of borrowed music is too often economy, the saving of money at the expense of art and of truth. The good unavailable music is safe from these economical depredations. It is too difficult to find, too expensive to get when found.

But these objections are only negative. The great gain of composed music is that it is vitally related to the dramatic element; it is an unfolding of it, an outgrowth of it; it is the thing itself orchestrally heard in addition to being seen, not merely something else which is tied up with it for the temporary purpose. The poles are not farther apart than borrowed music and composed music; the one is often very nice, but this is life.

Instantly the retort will come forth with natural confidence that it is all very well to advocate the original composition of music but that composers are scarce and good composers few. But I would boldly disagree with this idea. From more than five years experience in looking for composers and working with them I declare my belief that there are composers of ability to be found for the appreciative search all over the country from ocean to ocean and from Canada to the Gulf. Composed music is not restricted to work that is generously financed. Often composers of fine ability and wide reputation will gladly give their services for a very moderate fee or even gratuitously if the entire work is being done according to true principles of art and in a cooperative spirit. Nor is composed music restricted to elaborate work done on a large scale, such as the

Pageant of Cape Cod, the Pageant of Indiana, or Caliban. For one of the smallest and simplest productions with which I have been connected the music, a series of songs, was composed by a young girl of decided musical talent who in that way contributed her part, giving of her best in response to the best efforts in other lines of her friends. A declaration in favor of the original writing of a pageant or of a festival would not be received with awed questioning as extraordinary doctrine if not as fanatically absurd. No indeed, there are plenty in all communities who "really have a great deal of literary ability." Why should it be thought that a good composer is more difficult to find, proportionately to the requirements of the work, than a good dramatist? With respect to the soil out of which these fruit trees respectively grow, it may be noticed that privately owned pianos are more numerous than privately owned libraries, and that every church in the land has its organist, who is necessarily at least a pretty industrious student of music, if nothing more. It is most important to insist, to the point of at least temporary conviction, that borrowed music is in the main an unnecessary resort, so that pageant writers and festival writers and celebration communities may make a search, however incredulous, for the composer that is within their gates. Let us reverently play free with the word of Solomon, Remember your creators in the youth of your art. Cordial appreciation will find its composer ready to the need.

Granting now that faith, search and appreciation have brought their highest reward—a composer—what shall be asked of him? So often the music is with the kindest intentions relegated to a secondary place, and the composer is asked for a march here and a dance there and an accompaniment in another

place. In a word he is asked only for Incidental Music. There is comparatively little opportunity for the composer in this. Why not give the composer a chance to work out the pageant or the festival as a musical whole, not merely ask him to help decorate the splendid structure of the dramatist? In Pageantry the music is an integral element, not an embellishment. Incidental music is fragmentary music, and will unavoidably carry the fragmentary character with it into the pageant whole. The fragmentary will cast its defect into the drama. The flaw will affect and depreciate the whole crystal. In the creation of a pageant or masque or festival, all the work—drama, music, color, design, motion—should be done together into a unit from the point of view of the whole. In this the whole is not greater than any part, for every part is the whole viewed from a special but not a partial aspect. Art is of the fourth dimension.

The Pageant Master is, as it were, an orchestral conductor, whose function it is as such to see to it that all the coordinated arts say the same thing at the same time. He coordinates the work of his specialist assistant artists—his dramatist (usually himself), his composer, his colorist and designer, his director of motion or of dancing. It might be still better to say that he coordinates the artists themselves so that they work as one. So in the practical working out of their related functions, the Pageant Master should construct his dramatic production with the musical principles in mind and give it as a whole to the composer as an inspiring suggestion for him to work musically and coordinately with the other artists under the baton of the Pageant master. But it should be recognized that the first musical duty lies upon the pageant master, to construct the

drama so that it shall be not only practicable but inspiring from the standpoint of the composer.

The musical structure of Pageants (in the stricter, proper sense of the term) is too limited in its interest to be considered very extensively in this article, but it nonetheless may have some useful suggestion for work in smaller forms, just as the main structural principles of the symphony are the same as those of all musical structure. In the work of the writer the general form has been of four or five scenes usually of symbolic character and accompanied by orchestra, separated by groups of two or sometimes three scenes of historical and realistic character and not accompanied by orchestra. The musical development in these pageants has been toward the use of a motif system founded upon the essential historical and dramatic principles of the pageant. Three stages may be recognized: (1) The music constitutes a consistent series of musical numbers; examples, the Pageant of Meriden, New Hampshire (1913), and the Pageant of Darien, Connecticut (1913) both composed by Arthur Farwell. In these the composer was limited by the fact that the pageant master (myself) had not yet come to appreciate the value of the motif system in pageant music and did not construct a dramatic motif system into coordination with which the composer could construct a musical motif system. (2) The music shows a transitional position, having the first, third and fifth musical scenes composed upon a motif system, with the second and fourth contrastingly independent; example, the Pageant of Cape Cod (1914), composed by Daniel Gregory Mason. (3) The music as a whole, all the four or five scenes, composed on a motif system; examples, the Pageant of Indiana (1916, composed by Charles Divan Campbell, the Pageant

of the Massachusetts Agricultural College (1917), composed by Philip Greeley Clapp, and the Pageant of Auburn Theological Seminary (1918), composed by Frank LeFevre Reed.

Each of these structure-types has its special advantages, and these advantages depend mainly upon local and particular considerations not necessarily applying to other and general cases. It might be suggested however that for the tightwoven motif system of the third type, four musical scenes may be found sufficient; and that where five scenes are considered desirable the second type offers a well balanced and easy freedom of structure; and where the dramatic unity and the community continuity are sufficiently pronounced of themselves as in smaller pageants and in pageants of lighter story the first type brings a fresh charm which may be better than the somewhat massive effect brought by the recurrent motif system.

Two things should be borne in mind by the pageant master: (1) the tempo of musical expression is slower than of dramatic expression. A musical idea takes longer to express and also its effect lasts longer. In outdoor performance, further, longer is required than in indoor performance. For this reason the repetition of the musical ideas which is entailed by the motif system is specially desirable and results in a strong unity and simplicity. Musical ideas are not adequately grasped on one passing statement, as is a dramatic incident. So too the very silence, musically considered, resulting from the realistic scenes interposed between the musical scenes in a pageant gives a relief, i. e. a modeling, a background, to the musical element which heightens the effect of the whole.

The future of pageant music is a problem. It is

unfortunate that music should be composed, have its performance and speedily be lost. The solution must be worked out. Naturally music composed for dramatic use will not be at its best when performed in concert without the setting and without the dramatic action for which it is composed. On the other hand this has been done with good result, as when the first number of Daniel Gregory Mason's music for the Pageant of Cape Cod was played by Walter Damrosch with the New York Symphony Orchestra. For performance with the dramatic action it will be found that music of the first type will lend itself. Those independent numbers can be more easily taken out for separate use than the numbers which are parts of pageants composed upon a motif system, as for example "The Birds" from Arthur Farwell's Pageant of Meriden, and "Principle" from his Pageant of Darien, already referred to. But it may be that as pageant music is developed more and more so that it is itself the whole musically expressed, the pageant music may become feasible as a whole for concert performance as well as for dramatic performance and may be presented as a symphonic suite with four or five movements.

Let us now consider briefly music which may be adapted, music which is already composed. Apparently in contradiction to what has been said, it is to be recognized that sometimes the best result will be attained by such use. Art paradoxically extends in opposite directions at the same time; it is not restricted to the narrow field of single-truth logic. The danger sign should be heeded however that the use of adapted music is no less difficult, in fact is more difficult, than the use of specially composed music. What has been said about the already established associations is as true as ever. That handicap must

be overcome. The fitness of the new use must be so perfect and so powerful that it will obliterate the associations of the original use at least for the time being. This means that the entire dramatic element must be written into the character of the music, as is the case with Chopin's Prelude No. 20 in the Bronxville Christmas Mystery, 1914, and the Christmas Mystery of the War, 1917, during the action for which it is used, and with Grieg's Ase's Death in "The Sword of America," in which this music dominates and creates the atmosphere of the whole masque. Literally the music was not selected because it was suitable for the dramatic idea, but itself suggested and it might be said created the dramatic idea.

Thus far Pageant Music is only in its beginning. The same is true of the music of the Masque as a new form and the music of the Festival. All such music is experimental; the form and the principles must be worked out. Good results will be attained only by a sincere recognition of the music as an integral and a primary, not a secondary, element in the art, by a free trust of the composer to do creative work, and by a cordial cooperation between pageant master or dramatist and composer in striving to reveal the truth in all its beauty.

WILLIAM CHAUNCEY LANGDON.

THE DEMIGOD

HELEN CHEYNEY BAILEY

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

MOTHER WILLARD.

JIM, her son.

RANDALL.

MRS. JUDSON, a neighbor.

A grocery clerk.

ROSE.

TIME: April, 1917.

PLACE: The Living Room of a Workingman's Home.

Everything is plain, but scrupulously clean. Many of the articles of furniture have the appearance of being comparatively new. A table in the center is laid for mid-day dinner for two. The window and the street door are at the back; the door opening into kitchen at the left.

MOTHER WILLARD is discovered standing near the table, reading the morning paper. She drops it in a nervous, troubled way upon the table, goes to the window, looks out, glances at the clock, which points to 12:10, returns, and picks up the paper. A knock is heard at the street door. She hastens to open it.

RANDALL. [Without.] Does Mr. Willard live here?

MOTHER WILLARD. Er—yes, yes— That's my Jimmy. He ain't home yet. Won't you come in?

RANDALL. [*Entering.*] Thank you. He asked me to call during the noon hour so I would be sure to find him home.

MOTHER. If you'll just set down a bit, he'll be here any minit now. [*Curiously.*] He didn't say nothin' to me about you comin' [*She glances anxiously from the immaculate stranger to the dinner table.*] We're just cleaning up scraps for dinner today, an'—

RANDALL. Don't let that trouble you in the least, Mrs. Willard. I've only a moment's business to attend to. [*He shows a noticeable desire to avoid further conversation.*]

MOTHER. [*Glancing down at the newspaper once more, and evidently feeling obliged to entertain her guest.*] It looks like we're havin' war fer real. I almost dread to see the paper, mornin's.—I tell you it's mighty troublesome business havin' sons these days. There ain't no way to have any satisfaction out of 'em. Ef they stay at home, they're slackers, an' ef they go to the war—O, it's hard without their merry hearts.

RANDALL. [*Without interest.*] Yes, war is a terrible thing.

MOTHER. An' my poor Jimmy, now— He's jest got this little home fixed up fer him an' me. All his young years I worked fer him, an' then when he wasn't really growed yet, he says, "Mother, we're goin' to have a home some day, an' you shan't do nothin' but keep it nice fer me."

RANDALL. Good son, Mrs. Willard; good son you have.

MOTHER. An' now we've got it—an'—an'—when I read the papers I could almost wisht he was doin'

his bit. His father wouldn't 'a' waited long. But he jest can't make up his mind to leave me,—he jest can't. There was a girl he fell in love with a bit back, but when he bespake her, she says, "No, Jim; I'm not a-goin' into a home where I have to be pestered with an old woman"—so he jest dropped her.

RANDALL. Very unusual, Mrs. Willard. Quite remarkable.

MOTHER. Oh, he is remarkable. I wisht I knowed what to advise him. [*Footsteps are heard without.*] Here he comes.

[JIMMY enters—tall, slender, rather handsome. His attire is suggestive of his occupation—that of a mechanic. He is visibly agitated and ill at ease. His mother takes several steps towards him, but he glances around, as if expecting someone. He sees RANDALL and shakes hands awkwardly.]

JIM. How d'ye do, Mr. Randall? Sorry I'm late.

RANDALL. Quite excusable, Mr. Willard.

[*The mother looks from one to the other, and moves toward the kitchen.*]

JIM. I say, Mother, come here a bit, won't you!

MOTHER. [*Hastening back.*] I was jest goin' to look to your dinner, Jimmy.

JIM. I'm not hungry, Mother. I—I—got some-
thin' to be fixed up here.

MOTHER. [*In alarm.*] Nothin' wrong, is it?

JIM. No. [*Putting his arm about her shoulder.*] Look here, Mother, you know what a slacker I'm feelin'. You're feelin' it yerself. Now, if I was to know that you were safe and comfortable, it would make it a whole lot easier for me to go.

MOTHER. [*Whimpering.*] O Jimmy, Jimmy!

JIM. Now, I don't want you to feel bad about what I've done. I've—I've gone an' made arrangements for gettin' you into a Home where you'll be

looked after an' treated kind, an' all that;—an' Mr. Randall's here to get you to sign your name to the papers.

MOTHER. But, Jimmy, can't I stay here an' keep our little home nice till you come back?

JIM. [*Impatiently.*] Now look here, Mother, don't let's have a scene about it—I've done a lot of thinkin', an' my mind's younger an' clearer than yours, an' I've got it doped out that this is the best plan all 'round. I've done all the hard part, an' here's Mr. Randall here, an' all you've got to do is to sign your name an' be comfortable the rest of your life. Think of the load you'll be taking off my shoulders!

RANDALL. [*Spreading out the papers.*] Right here, Mrs. Willard.

MOTHER. When would I have to go?

JIM. [*Shifting uneasily from one foot to the other.*] I thought the quicker we did it the easier it would be. You get your things together an' I'll get off this afternoon an' take you over there. [*Weakly.*] It's an awfully pretty place.

MOTHER. But Jimmy! All the things! The pretty things we worked so hard to get! It'll take a spell to pack 'em up safe; an'—an'— [*She breaks down.*]

JIM. [*Irritated.*] Now see here, Mother,—I ain't got but an hour off, an' we got to get this thing settled. I don't want you to have to bother gettin' the house ready to leave. It would be hard, an' I'm sparin' you. I've got everything fixed up so you only have to get your duds together, an' we'll go away nice an' quiet, an' leave everything just the way it is. Then I got somebody to come in afterwards an' take care of all the rest.

MOTHER. [*Weeping.*] But they can't, Jimmy—

they can't—they don't know how! There's all the new quilts—an' the cat—

JIM. [*Sternly.*] Look here, Mother; didn't you always leave everything to me?

MOTHER. Yes—lately.

JIM. [*Less sternly.*] Well, didn't it always turn out right when you did?

MOTHER. Yes—

JIM. Well then, just let me manage this. It's because I love you. You don't want your son to be a slacker, an' I don't want my mother to be neglected, an' this is the easiest way to settle it. Don't you love me, Mother?

MOTHER. God knows it, Jimmy.

RANDALL. Right here, Mrs. Willard—

JIM. Right here, Mother,—just your name. Never mind gettin' ink. A pencil will do, dear. [*He breaks down himself.*] No—don't!—yes, go on, if you love me. Go on an' help me be a man. [*He walks from the table as she writes, stops and looks at her irresolutely, mutters "Hell," and goes back, putting his arm about her once more.*] That's it, dear.

RANDALL. Thank you, Mrs. Willard. Your son has made the necessary payment. We shall look for you this afternoon. Good-bye. [RANDALL goes out.]

MOTHER. [*Stretching her arms out to JIMMY.*] Oh, I've lost you. I've lost everything.

JIM. [*Embracing her hurriedly.*] Don't think for a bit, Mother, an' it'll be easier. I got to go now.

MOTHER. But your dinner, Jimmy. It's stew. When'll ye have another stew?

JIM. I can't eat, Mother. I'm not hungry. I'll be back at three. Just your duds, mind. [JIMMY leaves.]

MOTHER. [*Dazed.*] It's a soldier he's goin' to be. An' he didn't ferget me fer even his country. He done his best. An' he'll love me all the time, an' he won't love nobody more'n me. An' ef he didn't come back, it would be easier—in a Home. [*She walks over and looks at two pictures on the wall, one of her dead husband, one of JIMMY as a baby.*] I won't have nothin' to do there but jest pray an' pray fer him. Oh, I'm afraid I ain't got no God any longer! I'm afraid my God's all Jimmy! Oh, he'll look so han'some in his khaki—an' when he comes back he'll find some way to have his old mother with him once more. [*She walks to the table, listlessly picks up some dishes, and goes to the kitchen.*]

. *The curtain falls for a few moments.*

Two hours later, the table is cleared. MOTHER WIL-LARD is folding a red flannel petticoat, while the grocer's order clerk sits on the edge of a table watching her.

MOTHER. No, we won't need nothin' from the store. My Jimmy's goin' to war like a man. That's where you ought to be, instead of runnin' 'round urgin' folks to have beefsteak instead o' cabbage fer supper. I tell you, I'm proud of my Jimmy. When you find a man as is nice to his mother, you find a man as is worth while all round. There he went an' fixed everything to set me up in luxury in the finest room in the place, with a beautiful view, I reckon. It's cost him a pretty penny. An' he'll be a general while you're still a-knockin' at folks' back doors in bad weather, an' sniggerin' at simple girls. No girls ever upset my Jimmy. He knows his best friend when he sees her.

THE CLERK. I got to be goin'. So long! [*He goes out. The Mother folds the clothes vigorously for a moment, then goes and looks at the pictures. A*

knock on the door startles her, and she goes slowly to open it. MRS. JUDSON, a neighbor, comes in.]

MRS. JUDSON. Are ye busy, Mrs. Willard?

MOTHER. I ought to be, goodness knows, but I'm that upset I can't.

MRS. JUDSON. Yes, it is upsettin'—

MOTHER. Why, what do you know about it? Who told you?

MRS. JUDSON. I was talkin' to Rose Peters's mother this mornin'—

MOTHER. [*Abashed.*] Well, who'd 'a' 'sposed she'd know before me—

MRS. JUDSON. Well, bein' the girl's mother, you know, it's natural.

MOTHER. But he never really cared as much fer Rose as he did fer me, an' anyhow, no matter who he's told or when he told it, he's a fine brave boy, an' I'm proud of him, an' I'm not after sympathy from nobody. He's been dootiful, bless him! It would be a mercy if a few other women's sons would follow his example.

MRS. JUDSON. I don't know who yer slammin'. All three of mine's married very well, thank you!

MOTHER. Yes, an' hidin' behind their wives' petticoats, instead o' doin' their bit.

MRS. JUDSON. Well, will ye listen who's talkin' about hidin' behind women's petticoats! What else did your Jimmy get married for, I'd like to know!

MOTHER. My Jimmy married—

MRS. JUDSON. Well, what else 've we been talkin' about!

MOTHER. It's a lie. He ain't!

MRS. JUDSON. Why, his license is even in the papers. [*She picks up the paper and turns the pages vigorously.*] There— [*Folding it to show the place.*] An' they was married last night, an' Rose

is got all her things packed up for comin' here—an' it's a cozy little nest she's walkin' into—

MOTHER. Ye—ye better go, Mrs. Judson.

MRS. JUDSON. [*Relenting.*] I never dreamed ye didn't know it. Ye look faint. Can't I get you a cup o' tea?

MOTHER. No, thanks. I wisht ye'd go.

MRS. JUDSON. Lie down a bit,—do.

MOTHER. [*Fiercely.*] I told ye to go!

MRS. JUDSON. [*Angrily.*] Oh, well, if that's all the thanks I get, I will. [*She goes out and slams the door behind her.* MOTHER WILLARD walks slowly back and stands looking at the pictures. JIMMY enters.]

JIM. Ready, Mother?

MOTHER. [*Without turning.*] Jest a minit, Jimmy.

JIM. Can't I help ye somehow?

MOTHER. There's time a-plenty, Jimmy.

[*Silence ensues for a brief interval. Then JIMMY goes over to her and puts his arms about her.*]

JIM. Ye mustn't stand there starin' at the pictures, Mother. It'll make it harder fer ye. I'll send the pictures over fer you to have in yer room. It's past three. We got to be goin'.

MOTHER. [*Not moving.*] There's time a-plenty, Jimmy.

JIM. But there isn't. It's past time now.

MOTHER. [*Motionless.*] What branch of the service you goin' to enlist in, Jimmy?

JIM. It depends.— I got to find out what chances I'll have.

MOTHER. Then I reckon I don't have to hurry so.

JIM. But you do. I got to have time to get things straightened out here, an', besides, the Home's crowded, an' if you don't get there right away your good room'll be gone—

MOTHER. Yes, I'll get ready at once. [*She goes*

back to pack her little grip.] Just keep away from me an' I'll get along better.

[A step is heard outside. JIMMY starts, looks desperately at his mother, darts toward the door, then stops as it opens and a young woman, showily dressed, enters. MOTHER WILLARD does not even look around.]

ROSE. Still here? Ye said ye was going at three.

JIM. Ye needn't 'a' been in such a hurry.

ROSE. Ye needn't 'a' been so slow. I've waited about as long on your account as I've a mind to. Things are going to move quicker after this.

JIM. Sh-h— Mother, Rose was one o' the ones I asked to drop in an' help about straightenin' up, you know. She's capable an' all that.

[MOTHER WILLARD continues her folding without turning. JIMMY and ROSE are silent.]

JIM. Can't I do something, Mother?

MOTHER. Keep away from me, Jimmy!

JIM. But, Mother— [Breaking down.] Good Heavens!—I love you,—I swear I do— [He tries to embrace her.]

MOTHER. Keep away, Jimmy. [She closes her grip, reaches for her bonnet and shawl, and dons them in silence. JIMMY, who has been playing with his hat, pulls it down vigorously over his eyes.]

MOTHER. Ye needn't come along, Jimmy.

JIM. What are you sayin'? Of course I'm coming. I got to come.

MOTHER. I'm goin' alone.

JIM. [Starting toward her.] You're not. By God, you shan't go at all!

MOTHER. [Blazing and turning upon him, she points to the floor beside ROSE.] Stand there! [He obeys as if hypnotized. MOTHER WILLARD walks

to the pictures and gazes at them. ROSE puts her arm around JIMMY and whispers in his ear. MOTHER WILLARD turns and walks slowly to the door. While ROSE holds JIMMY, MOTHER WILLARD opens the door and goes out quietly.]

CURTAIN

KEEPING UP WITH THE NEW STAGECRAFT

O

VER a year ago I traced in *THE DRAMA* the development of the new stagecraft in America from its introduction in 1911 down through the theatrical season of 1916-1917. Since that time, however, the growth of the movement has been so rapid that it demands further attention if we are to make any pretense of keeping up with it. New fields have been entered, new figures have emerged, and the established men have continued to do their part in improving stage-mounting in our theatre.

The outstanding feature of the season of 1917-1918 was the successful appearance of the new stagecraft at the Metropolitan Opera House, which, in spite of a few experiments, had been consistently loyal to the old-fashioned Italian methods of stage decoration. This season, however, several artists of the new manner were asked to design scenery for operas—Willy Pogany for *Le Coc d'Or*, Joseph Urban for *Faust*, *Le Prophete*, and *St. Elizabeth*, Norman Bel-Geddes for *Shanewis*, and Livingston Platt for *The Dance in Place Congo*. Working under a management that was not entirely in sympathy with the ideals of the new stagecraft and upon a stage possessing serious physical limitations, they nevertheless gained a considerable success with public and critics.

Willy Pogany, the Hungarian artist, won perhaps the greatest triumph of the year with his decorations for *Le Coc d'Or*, an opera that offered at once

enormous difficulties and enormous opportunities. At the Metropolitan it was given as it had been arranged for the Ballet Russe, not as an opera but as an opera-pantomime; one set of characters sang the music and another mimed the action. The rising of a dull red and silver curtain revealed the stage, set with two huge choir boxes, one at each side, in which were the soloists and chorus, gowned and capped in dull red; between these boxes and before the fantastic decorations of the back drop the dancers acted out the story in pantomime. Pogany's decorations and costumes reflected remarkably the fantastic burlesque of the piece. The courtyard of King Dodon's palace was a marvel of glaring colors, distorted perspective, and absurd decorations. On the back drop was painted a gaudy, many-domed palace, and the remainder of the scenery was spotted with unbelievable flowers and impossible birds. The forest scene was equally bizarre; great dark birds sat on gaunt geometrical trees in the cool blue depths of the wood, and in the foreground rose the yellow pavilion of the Princess. Especially grotesque were the huge animals that the principal characters rode upon and the procession of freaks that followed in their train. *Le Coc d'Or* had a great popular success—a success to which Pogany's remarkable scenery and costumes contributed much.

Urban also won the approval of his new public at the Metropolitan. In returning to opera he was returning to the field of his greatest successes, and although he did nothing at the Metropolitan quite up to his best architectural settings at the Boston Opera House, he designed some very fine scenery for *Le Prophete*, *Faust*, and *St. Elizabeth*. Special reference should be made to the study, garden, and church scenes in *Faust*, as well as to the beautiful

classic background for the Walpurgis scene. The scenery for *St. Elizabeth* was characterized by his usual virtues in dealing with historical work—solidity of structure, beauty of color and design, and suggestion of the time without overemphasis. The final forest scene was unusually interesting. All his work at the Metropolitan owed much to his understanding of the miracle of light.

Brief mention may be made of the other new work at the Metropolitan. Norman-Bel Geddes, who has done interesting experiment on the Pacific Coast, designed settings for *Shanewis*. The scenery for the second act, a corner of an Indian reservation, was an attempt to gain beauty of design with difficult material. For *The Dance in Place Congo*, Platt designed a setting that was, unfortunately, less beautiful upon the stage than in the original drawing. All the new men, however, worked at the Metropolitan under conditions that made it difficult for them to do their best. But the important thing was to win a foothold, and the response of the public seemed to indicate that that had been done. It can scarcely be more than a matter of time before the old-fashioned conventionality gives place to the new beauty of the Metropolitan.

Not only in the production of opera but in the revival of Greek drama as well did the new stagecraft have its part in 1917-1918. For Miss Anglin's representations of the *Electra* of Sophocles and the *Medea* of Euripides, Livingston Platt designed costumes and settings. The revivals were not of the archæological "plaster-cast" type; the tragedy was made as poignant as possible for a modern audience, the orchestra took, to considerable extent, the place of the chorus, and the familiar white palace background was discarded. Limited as he was by the

shallowness of the stage, Platt designed scenery of great beauty and impressiveness—massive conventionalized settings of austere dignity. In *Electra* a broad flight of steps rose for some distance, then branched to right and left; huge pylons and statues flanked the steps against a background that suggested limitless distance. Against the neutral blues and grays of the setting, the costumes of the principal characters—black, scarlet, orange—stood out boldly. In *Medea* the setting was a rude palace with a great central door heavily barred with iron and lighted by flaring torches on either side. Throughout the play the lighting was a remarkable accompaniment to the mood of the scene, interpreting it just as did the music of the orchestra. Seldom has our stage seen such impressive settings.

Robert Edmond Jones, another man who had done much good work, continued in 1917–1918 to design settings for the productions of Arthur Hopkins, among them *The Deluge*, *The Rescuing Angel*, *The Wild Duck*, and *Hedda Gabler*, all realistic plays of modern life. When it is remembered that Jones made his reputation largely with his fine designs for the romantic pieces of the past, *The Dumb Wife* and *Til Eulenspiegel*, it is particularly interesting to watch him at work with modern plays that offer less opportunity for striking effects. In designing scenery for such pieces he apparently tried to convey the atmosphere of the play, to make his decoration an artistic design, and, also, to keep his background always unobtrusively a background. As to his success in mounting Ibsen, there was some difference of opinion; some thought his setting for *Hedda Gabler*, for instance, mannered and deficient in suggestions of locality and period, while others thought it an unobtrusive background, appropriate to the

spirit of the play. The whole question of the stylisation of the settings of a modern realistic play is a difficult one. Just how real or suggestive or conventionalized such a setting should be it is not easy to say. At any rate, the new stagecraft has shown the value of eliminating unnecessary details in a modern setting and the possibility of making greater use of the principles of pictorial design. In working out the relation of the new art of the theatre to the realistic drama, Jones is taking a prominent part.

The most interesting new figure to emerge into prominence as a designer of scenery was the artist, Rollo Peters. Although he had already done work for the Washington Square Players, it was only in 1917-1918 that he demanded serious attention. He had charge of the scenery for the Washington Square Players and planned many interesting settings for them, those for *His Widow's Husband* and *Salomé* being especially appropriate, although the latter suffered from the smallness of the stage. For the regular stage he set *Josephine*, *Madame Sand*, and *The Lady of the Camellias*, all plays, it will be noticed, that depended for their success upon the re-creation of the atmosphere of a period. To create this atmosphere by means of the simplicity of the new stagecraft was by no means an easy task, but he achieved success. All his work showed restraint and a fine simplicity of design. Perhaps he was most successful in the series of distinctly characterized rooms that formed the background of *Madame Sand*. All in all, he emerged as a decorator that should be watched—another artist that has come into the theatre.

Clifford Pember, also, who has been designing scenery for several years, came into considerable prominence in New York in 1917-1918, and although

his work is by no means of even merit, it deserves to be considered. He planned scenery for everything from Ibsen to musical comedy—*A Doll's House*, *Getting Together*, *Hamilton*, and the musical pieces *Oh Lady, Lady*, and *The Kiss Burglar*. In his use of color and line and in the simplicity of some of his effects he showed clearly the influence of the new stagecraft, but at times he used the methods of the old stagecraft as well.

In musical comedy, as before, the new stagecraft continued on its triumphant way with Urban as its chief leader. It is surprising how much work of a high grade he can turn out; yet it should be remembered that he is especially fortunate in having his own studios, with carefully trained workers to carry out his ideas. For the lighter musical stage, which his settings have revolutionized scenically, he did scenery for *Miss 1917*, *The Rainbow Girl*, *The Follies*, *the Midnight Frolic*, *The Riviera Girl*, and some of the best scenes for *Jack O' Lantern*. Very spectacular was his setting for the "Falling Leaves Ballet" in *Miss 1917*, which was set on the revolving stage; and in his best lighter style were the designs for *The Riviera Girl*, with their massive architecture and wonderful blue Mediterranean sky. *The Follies* was interesting chiefly for the use of many butterfly draperies in connection with the familiar inner proscenium. Many of the musical pieces that were not decorated by Urban clearly showed his influence.

The Little Theatres, which have always done much for the new stagecraft, have remained loyal to it. There was scarcely a Little Theatre in the country that did not make experiments with stage settings and costumes that deserve consideration. Of the many, I can hope to mention only a few. At the Greenwich Village Theatre there was a beautiful

Behind a Watteau Picture and some good designs by John Wenger. At the Neighborhood Theatre the productions of festivals and a Noh play were interesting for scenery and lighting. For Stuart Walker's company Frank Zimmerer designed unusual settings for *Job* and for some modern plays. And at the Arts and Crafts Theatre of Detroit, Sam Hume and Katherine McEwen continued their notable work.

Mention should be made, too, of M. Copeau's Théâtre du Vieux Colombier, which was brought to New York in the autumn of 1917. M. Copeau's theatre emphasized some things that we need constantly to be reminded of. Believing that the modern theatre had become too elaborate, he went back to the stage of Molière and Shakespeare in search of simplicity. From each he took suggestions which he used in his New York theatre. There were three stages—the outer apron stage, well out in the midst of the spectators; the middle stage, reached at either side by proscenium doors with windows above them; and the back stage, or stage proper. Around the back of the stage proper ran a balcony supported by pillars and reached by staircases that could be rearranged in different ways, and on the stage proper stood a platform upon which much of the action of the old pieces took place. By a rearrangement of platform, steps, and staircases, or by the use of draperies or screens, the setting could be varied almost indefinitely. But the decoration was always a simple conventionalization in neutral tones, for M. Copeau believes that the setting is only a background to throw into relief the actor and the play. Such experiments in simplicity and mobility are needed to remind us of the elaborateness and mechanical clumsiness of our modern stage settings.

Not only in the professional and amateur theatres,

but in vaudeville, in the motion-picture, and upon the concert stage, the new stagecraft has made at least some slight appearance. In vaudeville have appeared some interesting settings consisting of draperies used with a blue cyclorama. In the decorations of a few motion-pictures there have been suggestions of the new manner. And in some of the elaborate motion-picture theatres as well as in some concert halls there have been experiments with the effectiveness of scenery and light as accompaniments to music. For instance, colored lights thrown on the draperies of the stage suggested the mood of the music played by a pianist, or an interpretative background expressed the spirit of orchestral music played before it. Inconclusive as these experiments have been, they at least indicate the direction in which there may possibly be some development.

Nor should it be forgotten that many interesting stage settings which never see the stage are being designed. More and more are artists experimenting in this field and showing their designs at occasional exhibits of stage models. Maxfield Parrish, for instance, has designed many stage settings, among them decorations for *The Tempest*. John Alexander was long interested in Maude Adams's productions as Monroe Hewlett now is. Stuart Benson, Robert W. Chanler, Howard S. Cushing, and Jules Guerin have all exhibited designs for stage settings. Lee Simonson has a remarkable color sense that our theatre should make wider use of. Perhaps, however, the cause of the new stagecraft would be better served if a few more architects devoted themselves to it along with the artists, for at its best it demands rather the technique of architecture than that of painting.

If the artistic advance of the new stagecraft in

America sometimes appears less rapid than we could wish, we must remember that the designers work under great disadvantages. They must design their settings for stages equipped with inadequate old-fashioned devices. Many times they cannot secure artistic lighting. Their designs are often ruined by the unskilful scene-painters upon whom they have to depend for the execution of their ideas. Moreover, the modern plays that form the bulk of drama produced in the commercial theatre give fewer opportunities for unusual and beautiful designs than imaginative drama, and opportunity is essential to striking success. In spite of all these disadvantages, progress goes on, and the new stagecraft establishes itself more firmly each season.

There is, of course, one constant danger to its future—the danger of compromise with the old-fashioned methods. If the new stagecraft is to reach its fullest development, it must be absolutely uncompromising. It first sprang from a desire to evaluate anew in the interest of beauty everything connected with the stage, and it can advance only by being able to criticise itself. If makeshifts are necessary temporarily, they must be recognized as makeshifts, and not considered conventions. If problems prove difficult they must be given continued experiment. The troublesome questions of exterior design, stylisation, painted or real perspective, and the relation of the settings to the actor and the author must be squarely faced. We must not expect too rapid progress, for, after all, the new stagecraft is only in its infancy in our theatre; but if its best ideals are served, its possibilities are almost limitless.

WILLIAM LEIGH SOWERS.

APOLOGIES TO DANIEL

A FOOTNOTE ON HISTORICAL ACCURACY, WRITTEN AS A
PREFACE TO "MORRACA"

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REALISM is the bumblebee in the bonnet of the twentieth century which has stung modern art into a blind passion for colloquialism; and it seems about time to apply a little mud on the sting, unless we admit that we like the spectacle of artists hopping about in pain on one foot.

Strictly speaking, there can no more be such a thing as realism in art than there can be such a thing as poetry in business, for immediately you let facts in at the door imagination flies out at the window. Nevertheless, such is the seductive influence of words that the phrase *realism in art* has gathered unto itself a certain sceptre-like power in the empire of art-criticism. While it is obviously impossible to transcribe literally the most dramatic farewell speech any woman ever made on leaving a drunken brute of a husband and call that speech drama; while it is equally impossible, let us say, to buy a canvas ten miles long and ten miles high, decorate it with all the colors of the sunset, laid on in their proper proportions, and call that picture a painting; while it is a piece of arrant idiocy unworthy of a mad-house to plant orchid seed six feet under ground in the middle of winter and expect a wilderness of beauty to bloom in our door yard on the morrow, the old-new insidious belief that art blossoms somehow from the arid soil of fact, flourishes like a weed

dropped among lilies. It is a persistent poacher in the whispering forest of the imagination that has slain more bright-coloured birds of paradise than any intruder in that forest, excepting science.

Realism vs. Art

These of course are platitudes of a fairly obvious order. That is to say, they are current verbal coin in the pockets of everyone who believes that literature should be something more than a stenographic report of the gossip of the universe, that pictorial art is not simply a hand-made photograph of flowers and fruits and mountains and galloping horses, and that a symphony—even Beethoven's Pastoral symphony—never yet sat down seriously to fool anybody into thinking that brass and cat-gut can make a noise like a nightingale. Moreover, proof that this general belief in regard to the arts is the common if unconscious possession of us all—and hence is a platitude of a most unblushing order—is furnished by the habitual attitude we strike when confronted by a work to which we rightly or wrongly have affixed the explanatory phrase "of art." If we consider that it is such a work of art we at once apply our standard of unreality to it. If it is real, we know that it is journalism, and nothing more. If it is unreal, however—if it is such a clash of high-sounding cymbals as is heard only from the throne of the spirit of man—then we know that it is art and that its music has somehow achieved immortality.

The Enchantment of Distance

This at any rate is a rough sketch of our attitude toward art in its relation to contemporary facts. But the dead, it seems, have a particular sanctity of

their own. Past events cast their halos behind them. Run a man through the breast because he has looked languishingly on your wife, and unless you can command legal talent of quite an exceptional order, the chances of your being acquitted in a court of justice are about as rare as a day in June. Run a man through the breast, however, on the same provocation, one or two centuries ago, and the chances are you will find that today you are not only being pardoned right and left by your contemporaries for a deed which was both preposterous and silly, but that you are being hailed as a romantic figure out of the pages of history, a creature of astounding character, daring, and charm. In short, the perspective of time has caused myopia in the eyes of your judges; and the world, squinting at your deed, proclaims it sacred and inviolate at the hands of any future dramatist who might be tempted to tamper with its details for the sake of gaining greater dramatic effect. It is this ridiculous tradition of fetiching the past that no doubt accounts in a large degree for the meticulous care with which historical novels and historical plays are compounded. It also accounts for historical novels' and historical plays' invariable baldness and stupidity.

Now, if, when an author decided to step back a few eras into the past, he would be satisfied merely with taking out membership in some public library and asking his way to the archæological department, no one could remonstrate with him at all—unless it was to offer the polite suggestion that as an author he was hideously wasting his time. But a man who will go to the length of measuring fossils at a time when he is ostensibly out for creating romantic worlds of his own never leaves the results of his research behind in a coat-room. He may forget to

call for his umbrella; but his newly acquired, perfectly interesting and perfectly useless information will stick to him like a leech. It will follow him all the way home. It will pursue him to his very desk. And it will suck out any ideas he originally may have had as fast as a double-action forty-horsepower suction pump will suck out the blood from a baby.

Here Endeth the First Lesson

For this grievous sin against the holy ghost of his imagination an author is no more to blame than a poet-laureate who at regular intervals drowns the honest melody of his pen in a flood of noisy bangings on the royal kettledrums. A poet may be a weakling to accept the post of imperial chanticleer; but in the end the fault lies less with the poet than it does with the public, for without the consent of the public there would not be any king, and hence no poet-laureate to crow about him. In like manner, without the consent of the theatre-going, novel-reading public, slavery to this fetich of historical detail would be abolished before you could wink your eye or say Jack Robinson. When the public pays the piper there is only one tune, and that tune is invariably the hoochie-coochie of realism—not the crude realism, you understand, that calls for first editions in its stage-libraries, for five honest-to-God brands of real live whiskey in its stage-cafés, for real telephone instruments connected directly with the Bell telephone system in its stage boudoirs, for guaranteed-genuine-or-your-money-refunded-at-the-box-office diamond cuff-links in its stage-heroes' absolutely authentic extra-heavy pure silk shirts, price ten dollars apiece; not even the less obvious though no less crude realism that achieves dramatic fervor by setting off nicely timed "Damns," "Go to hells,"

"My Gods," and "I should worrys" like so many toy bombs—though such gentle belascooings have undoubtedly thrilled more than one shapely ear with their subtle music; not, yet again, the stock realism that indulges in airy references to La Salle Street if the scene is laid in Chicago, and to Times Square and Riverside Drive if it is laid in New York City. Popgun explosions of realism such as these are no more dangerous to a state of sound imaginative drama than a wooden pistol fired point-blank against the side of a modern battleship. Indeed, they have about as much to do with dramatic art of any sort as a cow has to do with interpretative dancing; and, as I pointed out before, the audiences they were originally invented to beguile are getting, if they have not already got, tired of them, just as they got tired in turn of various other sorts of silly entertainment such as ouija boards, tether ball, and Billy Sunday. The realism which is dangerous, on the contrary, is a broad generic realism. It is the deliberate imitation of life, not in any of its picayune details (which, after all, is mere childishness), but in its whole wide sweep of human action.

It may be said in retort that literary and dramatic art is exactly such a deliberate imitation of life. Well, it may also be said that the moon is made of green cheese. The fact remains that the moon is not made of green cheese: it is made of cold, hard, metallic, uneatable lava. Anybody who thinks that art is even a faint imitation of that rambling, chaotic, bulging thing called life, has only to compare, say, Pinero's *Tunderbolt* with the average rural English family's squabble over a will, to be convinced forever of the error of his ways. If art holds up a mirror to contemporary facts at all, it is a mirror in which cabbages become chrysanthemums and men

and women are seen as degenerate gods strutting through a gloriously ramshackle heaven. And—as I have been at enormous pains to establish—any definition of art that holds true regarding present-day events should hold equally true regarding past ones.

Who Swallowed Daniel?

All of which brings us down to a very concrete matter: what business has a man to knock history over the head, rifle its pockets, and throw the corpse into the wayside? Put even more concretely: what right had I to substitute David, a young man, for Daniel, an old one, when, according to the best reports, it was Daniel and not David who read the prophecy on the wall of Belshazzar the king? This is not the only snub, as you will presently observe, that *Morraca* gives to the plain facts of the story which is related by sacred historians. However, it is a significant snub. And apologizing for it may explain away some of the apparent rudeness of the others.

First of all, in case you have been staying away from church lately, let me refresh your memory in regard to the main points of the original biblical narrative.

It is night in the court of Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans. In the banquet chamber of the palace the king and his friends and flatterers are gorging themselves to the extreme limit of their lordly and aristocratic stomachs. In good modern slang, they are having a hell of a time. The details of the orgy are withheld, but we are permitted to infer that the banquet was something of a riot. Whatever may be said against Belshazzar in his political life, it is evident that he was anything but a stingy host. Wine

flowed unceasingly—and the rest of the story is left discreetly to your imagination. But just at this point something dramatic happens. A shadow creeps over the royal feast. It touches Belshazzar on the forehead, and in an instant he lies crumpled up like a discarded paper napkin. He staggers to his feet, his eyes popping out of his head in terror, his hands shaking like two withered leaves in a gale. He has passed through the first stage of inebriety and has now gone on to the second stage. In other words, he is beginning to see things, and the precise things that he is beginning to see are a hand and some handwriting on the royal wall—not very dreadful objects to look at for a man completely in his senses, but sufficiently terrifying for a man who is pursued by a guilty conscience and who is more than half drunk besides. What does he do? What would you do under similar circumstances? You would run, of course. If you were a king and the son of Nebuchadnezzar you would run with as much dignity as remained in you. But run you would. And if you had been brought up in a belief in the infallibility of soothsayers instead of in the infallibility of science, there is just one place you would run to: the arms of an astrologer.

And that, in effect, is what Belshazzar does. Wine, Ceremony, and Song are completely forgotten in a mad rush to get at someone who can explain the uncanny episode of the handwriting on the wall. He gallops out of the Banquet Hall and proceeds to gather his astrologers around him as a man will gather a coat around his shoulders to keep off an icy wind. Superstition by this time is whistling through his royal garments and freezing up the very marrow in his soul. What was the meaning of the hand? According to the traditions of the day, he has done

something evil in the sight of heaven, and he knows it. He has used the gold and silver goblets of the temple for profane ends. At his own command the blood of holy sacrifice has been turned into mockers' wine. He has blasphemed the Lord and the thunder of heaven is in his ears. Yet, to his dismay, the court astrologers can tell him nothing at all. They are as dumb as cattle in a snow storm. And Belshazzar's secret hope that some explanation of the phenomenon would be forthcoming—an explanation that would appear reasonable to his intelligence as well as reassuring to a man of his superstitious temperament—that hope dies like a rose under a November frost.

Now, it is at this point in the narrative that history begins to wobble perilously on the highway of art and head disastrously for the ditch. Consider the vague, bungling, undramatic chain of events that follows the foregoing highly sinister prologue. Here we have a king, the son of a blasphemous rake, and one of the most powerful personages in ancient Asiatic biography, toppling on the extreme edge of a precipice of superstitious horror. Religious fear in those days was no casual bending of the knee: it was a back bared hungrily to the lash, a forehead biting deep into the dust. The fact that Belshazzar openly affronted a peculiarly sacred rite does not prove that he was ahead of his day: it merely proves that when wine was not in him a certain amount of courage was. Like his father Nebuchadnezzar, who had originally removed the sacrificial cups from the temple in a fit of defiant glee, he was occasionally capable of braving the anger of heaven. Though he might immediately after repent through fright, he could shake his fist in God's face and dare Him to return the compliment. In brief, he was something

of an individual. Well, what happens to this individual? Does he succumb, for example, as I have made him do, to the wit of a crafty woman who sees her opportunity of taking advantage of the widely known fact that when Nebuchadnezzar similarly taunted the skies he had happened to come on evil days? Not at all. Not for a moment. Life is never so dramatic or compact. Having called together his soothsayers and failed to receive the desired information, Belshazzar glances around his court in a quandary; whereupon, in marches the queen, and, like the never-failing spouse in *Swiss Family Robinson*, produces Daniel to order; Daniel, a fellow grown grey in the business of reading mysteries, glibly interprets the writing on the wall to mean that the king is a doomed man; the doomed man succumbs that night as meekly as you please—perhaps he suffered from heart trouble and was a bad insurance risk; the aforesaid Daniel, in the course of political time, is given a small kingdom of his own in payment for his troubles; the queen is left dangling in a most unpleasant manner; heaven is satisfied; the audience is mightily dissatisfied; and—there the matter ends.

The Gospel According to St. Parkhurst

But there the matter most emphatically does not end for anybody with a taste for drama in his mouth. Indeed, it has only just begun. Appropriating the preceding story by simply throwing it into dialogue and running up the curtain on the result, is equivalent to asking a man to dinner and saying: "My dear fellow, my motto in life is that one should never tamper with nature. As you observe, the meat on your plate is absolutely raw, and the potatoes which I have just given you are neither pared nor boiled.

However, they are both excellent articles of food and I am sure you will find them delicious." Which may be a rational speech from your point of view but is hardly a toast calculated to titillate an empty stomach.

The inference that follows is obvious. Morraca, unpalatable beef in her original state, needed considerable dramatic stewing to bring out her full savour; Daniel, decidedly small potatoes as a bearded Cook-tourist-guide through occultism, demanded that his nails be pared and his name changed if a romantically inclined queen was to fall in love with him. To preserve the figure, a chef became immediately necessary; also, it should be added, a manicurist and a general conjurer of unromantic facts. Thus it happened that, having looked over the ground carefully, it became pressingly evident to me that if I wanted to concoct a play out of the material I had on hand I should have to appoint myself that conjurer and start practising sleight-of-hand tricks without delay.

And that, as you will see, is exactly what I have done. You may quarrel with the result of my legerdemain. It may annoy you. It may bore you. It may drive you to drink. It may even drive you to writing a play of your own for the sake of showing how such a play actually ought to be written. What is more, if such a dreadful state of affairs should come about, I shall feel appropriately sad and drop bitter tears on this paper in reflecting that I have failed of being the dramatist it was my firm intention to be. But if your annoyance is with the result rather than with the method, then there is hope for us all; for the hot sun of your criticism shining through my tears will put a rainbow of promise in the sky, and that rainbow will signify that the flood of realism is past and fair weather lies ahead.

Wherewith the Curtain Finally Begins to Rise

Perhaps this has been a complicated and unnecessarily roundabout way of explaining away the brutality with which I disposed of Daniel. I commenced to apologize to him, and all that now seems left for me to do is to apologize to him at once for not apologizing to him at all. However, that procedure in the end would smack of insincerity. It would be suspiciously like offering a man a drink directly after you had struck off his head. The plain fact of the matter is that, metaphorically at least, I struck off not only Daniel's head but his whole torso. And I did it deliberately. I murdered him in cold blood, with as little compunction of conscience as Morraca felt when, later, she murders the king. Was her act essentially bloodthirsty? Was mine? The answer to that question I have put directly into the mouth of Morraca: whatever is beautiful is holy. *Æsthetics*, in other words, is the Federal law of the artist, and anything else, in dramaturgy, music, or painting, is treason. Do not, therefore, complicate a very simple matter by dragging in meaningless codes of morality. David was not the David of stone-slinging fame one whit more than Morraca herself was the biblical wife of Belshazzar—a conventional, timid spouse whose perfect fidelity to her husband has never yet been questioned by gallant theologians. David, in fact, was simply invented for the occasion. And because he was young and desirable and altogether beautiful, the feet of this youthful visionary slipped naturally into the shoes of the dead Daniel and in them he climbed steadily up the high hill of romance to a spot which is never touched by any except the hungry feet of imagination.

It may be contended that the whole play thus

deliberately turns its face away from history. All I can reply to this criticism is that I hope it does. A play is nothing if it does not partake somewhat of the nature of a dream. And dreams are had only when you shut your eyes.

WINTHROP PARKHURST.

*In that night was Belshazzar, the king of
the Chaldeans, slain.*

—Daniel v: 30.

MORRACA

A Play in One Act

by

WINTHROP PARKHURST

PERSONS

BELSHAZZAR, King of the Chaldeans.

MORRACA, his wife.

NIN, a Nubian slave.

RAB, a Nubian slave.

DAVID, a youth beloved of Morraca.

ABED-ABED, chief astrologer to the court.

BARA-BARA, chief interpreter of dreams.

TOMBSTONE, chief physician to the court.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Court,
Slaves, Eunuchs, Attendants.

*The scene is the Great Reception Hall in the Court
of the King of the Chaldeans, which leads away
at the rear to the Great Banquet Hall wherein
are seated KING BELSHAZZAR and his friends,
feasting. Torches of cypress wood, mounted with
silver bowls, furnish the light for both chambers.*

In the Banquet Hall figures of slaves can be seen passing to and fro; and from time to time, though always faintly, there come sounds of revelry and laughing. In the Reception Hall the light at first is subdued, but it is easy to see that the room is magnificently appointed: there is a golden dais on the right, and several golden chairs in the form of couches are placed about at convenient intervals. An immense incense urn stands near the dais. Incense is burning in it. The air of the whole Court is rich and heavy as befits the atmosphere to be breathed by a king.

Two figures are discovered in the semi-darkness of the Reception Hall. They are the two Nubian slaves, NIN and RAB; and they stand guard with immense spears supported in their hands, one on the right side of the great portal leading into the Banquet Chamber, the other on the left side. They are as motionless as bronze gods. They look neither to the right nor to the left, but stand immovable like a pair of gigantic statues whose feet have rusted to the floor with age.

A sudden burst of laughter from outside stirs them into a semblance of life. One of the two—NIN, the slave stationed on the right—shuffles his foot cautiously on the floor. The other in response quietly clears his throat.

NIN. He is long tonight with his feasting.

RAB. That he is.

NIN. [*After a short pause.*] I have a pain in the back of my neck to make me fit for murder.

RAB. That I have myself.

[*There is another pause.*]

NIN. Does anyone come?

RAB. No.

NIN. Listen! [*They listen a moment. There is a burst of laughter in the Banquet Hall.*]

RAB. We are safe to talk with a noise like that stopping their ears.

NIN. Ho! It is not of them I am afraid.

RAB. No? Of whom are you afraid?

NIN. The queen.

RAB. The queen? Ho! who cares for the—

NIN. S-s-s-t! [*The two slaves freeze instantly into their original stolid positions. Only after some moments, and then with the utmost caution, do they dare relax and continue their conversation.*] You fool, you! Would you like to hang tomorrow?

RAB. There was no one to hear me say that.

NIN. There was a footstep in the outer corridor. I heard it very plainly.

RAB. You are forever hearing things since you took to religion. You are as nervous as a woman.

NIN. The Lord of Hosts hath appointed a day when all the ends of the earth shall fear him, and all the kings of the world shall fall down before Him and worship Him. He also hath prepared a scourge for such of them as do not confess Him and bless His holy name. That is what the priest said this morning.

RAB. You fool! Of course he said it this morning. That is what he is paid to say.

NIN. It is true, just the same, I am sure. And I advise you to be careful what you say about the priest. He is a very wise man.

RAB. Any man is wise who can make a living without doing any work. But tell me: how did you come to hear the priest talking? You are never allowed inside the temple.

NIN. No. But the wind carried his voice to the

outer court where I was standing attendance on the queen.

RAB. What! does the queen ever go into the temple?

NIN. Certainly she does.

RAB. But why does she go into the temple?

NIN. Why does anyone go into the temple? To worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, of course.

RAB. Ho! To worship the Lord! To worship David, more likely. She does not believe in the Lord. I have heard her say so myself.

NIN. The queen must believe in the Lord. Otherwise she would not go into the temple, would she?

RAB. Certainly she would. She would go anywhere at all that she could worship David.

NIN. David? Who is David? Is he another prophet of Baal?

RAB. I know nothing of all these different religions. I mean David the beautiful youth of whom the queen Morraca is so enamoured.

NIN. The queen Morraca is enamoured of the fellow, you say?

RAB. Yes. Have you never heard how she follows him about continually? Why, some even say she desires to make him king.

NIN. Make him king!

RAB. Not so loud, you fool!

NIN. [*In a whisper.*] Did you say she desires to make him king?

RAB. Certainly. Where are you ears, that you never hear any of the tales of this court till I tell them to you? Is religion such a bad disease that it makes you deaf as well as blind?

NIN. [*Haughtily.*] I have other things to do besides listen to the gossip of every fool around me. . . . But tell me more of this tale. I am interested.

What did you say the fellow's name was? David? And what was that you said about making him king?

RAB. I said nothing at all about it. [*There is laughter in the Banquet Hall.*] I wish to God they would finish their wine and let us go to bed. My back is broken, standing here like a mummy.

NIN. And mine!

RAB. It's a slave's life, this, being a slave.

NIN. That it is. But some time perhaps we shall be rewarded.

RAB. Rewarded? Where?

NIN. In heaven.

RAB. Ho! In heaven! I hope so. We are not likely to be, down here. [*There is loud laughter outside.*] That's certain.

NIN. Listen to them now.

RAB. Yes. They are drunk, drunk as dogs. I wish to God somebody would make *me* king. [*The laughter continues.*]

NIN. They say he is drinking out of the gold and silver chalice cup tonight—the same that stands in the temple and holds the blood of the holy sacrifice.

RAB. I can believe that. He sounds merry enough to drink out of anything.

NIN. They say he ordered all the gold and silver goblets taken from the temple and brought into the Banquet Hall tonight so that he and his friends could drink out of them and make merry together.

RAB. Wine must taste good out of a gold and silver goblet. I should like to try some myself.

NIN. O, but it is very evil to do such things. It is very evil indeed to take away the gold and silver goblets from the temple and drink out of them. The Lord of Hosts will punish king Belshazzar for doing such a thing, I am sure.

RAB. You fool! Have you never heard it said that a king can do no wrong?

NIN. Yes. But that is a mistake. The priest said so this morning. I heard him myself through the window. He said a king is like everybody else in the sight of God. Only the Lord of Hosts omnipotent reigneth. That is what he said.

RAB. If he says it very often he will lose his head like everybody else. There is too much of this sort of talk going around nowadays. It is not healthy.

NIN. It is wicked just the same to drink wine out of the gold and silver goblets. Only the blood of the holy sacrifice should ever be poured into the goblets. That is what the priest has said, and he is a very wise man.

RAB. You are a big fool. What difference does it make what you drink out of, so long as it is clean and beautiful. Besides, the king has a right to drink out of anything he wants to. If he has not, what is the use of his being king?

NIN. No, you are wrong. I tell you, he has no right. It is very wicked to drink out of the gold and silver goblets. The Lord of Hosts will punish king Belshazzar for wickedness. The priest said so, and I am sure of it. [*There is a tremendous uproar in the Banquet Hall, which is succeeded by a sudden, ominous hush.*]

RAB. Hold your tongue! Something has happened out there. They are all getting up from the table.

NIN. They are drunk, that is all. They do not know what they are doing.

RAB. No. Something has happened. Look! Look! . . . The king is running toward us. He is holding his hands over his eyes and shouting. [*There is the*

sound of a man's voice outside shouting in terrible fear.]

NIN. He is drunk with the wine he has drunk from the gold and silver goblet. Put up your spear. [*He raises his spear and stands at attention.*]

RAB. [*Also at attention.*] You are right. They are all drunk, I guess.

NIN. Yes, they are all drunk. But God will punish him for this. He will lay His hand very heavily on—

RAB. S-s-s-st! [*They stand motionless as KING BELSHAZZAR comes running in through the portal. He holds his hands over his eyes as though to shut out some dreadful sight. He trembles with an ague. Two or three companions attempt to rally to his support, but he motions them away. By degrees the whole court fills the Reception Hall.*]

BELSHAZZAR. [*He sinks to a dais.*] No, no, no, no, no. I cannot stand it. Take it away, take it away, take it away! [*He utters a horrified scream and attempts to ward off an impending horror.*]

A GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. [*Advancing obsequiously.*] The king is overwrought tonight.

ANOTHER GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Of a truth, I fear he is not well.

BELSHAZZAR. I say, take it away, take it away. Ah, will you never take it away?

A GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. [*Advancing to the dais, bowing.*] O king Belshazzar, great is thy name in all the land. We bow before thee and thy greatness. [*Bowing.*] We bow before thee continually. [*Bowing.*] Behold, we bow before thee now and evermore. [*Bowing.*]

ANOTHER GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. O king, thou art truly great indeed. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are thy greatness and thy wisdom above all thy people. O king, perchance some

slight ailment doth grieve thy spirit. . . . O king, we bow to thee. . . . The—should I peradventure call thy physician? . . . O king, we bow to thee continually. . . . These slight disorders of the spirit are oft the forerunners of more grievous ills. . . . O king, we bow to thee now and evermore.

BOTH GENTLEMEN OF THE COURT. O king, we bow to thee. We bow to thee now and evermore. [*Both bow repeatedly.*]

BELSHAZZAR. [*In a fury.*] Get out of my sight! Be gone! . . . Will no one take it away from me? Is there no one here who can take it away from me?

TOMBSTONE. Yea, king, thy physician.

BELSHAZZAR. O, look! It is coming near, nearer. . . . I tell you, I cannot stand it to come any nearer. No, no, no. I cannot stand it. Take it away, I say; take it away. I cannot stand looking at it any longer.

TOMBSTONE. Thy hand, O king. Thy hand.

BELSHAZZAR. Nay, it is not my hand, but another's. Cannot you see that it is another's. Look! Look! . . . It is writing something now. It is writing . . . some word . . . on the wall. Take it away, take it away.

TOMBSTONE. Thy hand, O king. O king, let me feel thy hand!

A GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. The king is overwrought tonight. He is ill.

ANOTHER GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Too much wine, I fear, hath vexed his spirit sorely.

TOMBSTONE. [*In a quandary, as BELSHAZZAR sits with both hands pressed closely to his temples, moaning.*] O king, thy hand. Thy hand, O king. O king—*thy hand*. Wilt thou not give me thy hand? . . . Then, if thou wilt not give it unto me, forsooth, must I even write down thine ailment in the dark and

without knowing what it is. [*To a slave.*] My tablet. Bring me my tablet. [*The slave fetches a tablet.*]

BELSHAZZAR. Ah, that is it. It is too dark in here, I think. That is why I am afraid. Let us have more light. [*To the court.*] More light, I say. Do you hear me? More light! Light the torches. Make everything as bright as day. [*Slaves bring in flaming torches.*] Ah, so; that is better. It was only in the dark that I was afraid. I cannot bear the dark. It frightens me. Now I cannot see the hand any more. Why, it has ceased writing. Nay, it has disappeared altogether.

TOMBSTONE. Behold, O king, since the days of thy father Nebuchadnezzar, whom I attended in his last days, has my learning never failed. Then, O king, wilt thou not give unto me thy hand? See: I have written down all thine ailments here. Now let me determine if they are right.

A GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Behold, is not this man very wise? Look you, he has nearly cured the king of his humour.

ANOTHER GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. He is indeed a marvellous physician. Did you not hear him just say that it was he who attended Nebuchadnezzar in his last days?

A GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Nebuchadnezzar died. We must not forget that.

ANOTHER GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. That is true. But must not all men die at one time or other? Doubtless Nebuchadnezzar would have died anyway.

A GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Yea, doubtless he would have died anyway. Oh, is not medicine a very wonderful thing?

ANOTHER GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Behold, it is a very wonderful thing!

TOMBSTONE. [*Still waiting patiently by the dais:*]

O king, thy hand. Behold, O king, thy hand! I say unto thee, wilt thou not give me thy hand?

BELSHAZZAR. [*Half to himself.*] Ah, cannot any one take it away from me? Cannot any one take it away?

TOMBSTONE. O king, thy hand. Thy hand, O king. O king, thy hand!

BELSHAZZAR. [*Angered.*] Be gone! Wherefor dost thou continually ask me for my hand?

TOMBSTONE. [*Obsequiously.*] O king, only that I may determine the nature of thy disorder; for without touching thy hand, O king, am I not able to write down on my tablet what aileth thee.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Shortly.*] Then, forsooth, do not write it down. There has been too much writing in this court for one day, already. Of a truth, I say unto you there has been too much writing here to please me. Put by thy tablet now and call Abed-Abed for me; call all the wise men of Chaldea; call the Chief Interpreter of Dreams; call the whole court. I will make inquiry into this affair. I will discover if I can the meaning of that which happened in the Banquet Hall tonight while I was yet drinking wine and making merry with my friends. For I tell you, I do not like what has happened tonight. It hath a very ill omen.

TOMBSTONE. O king, I do pray of thee now to give me thy hand if only for one moment. Thou art not well, O king. I say unto thee I know thou are not at all well to say such things. Behold, I say unto thee O king, I am sure of it!

BELSHAZZAR. [*To the court.*] Didst hear my wishes? Then do them. [*Several attendants go out at the right. The KING turns to TOMBSTONE.*] Be gone. I have had enough of this infernal twaddle. I am well; of course I am well. Can a man who is

not well drink twenty goblets of wine and not fall under the table?

TOMBSTONE. Behold, O king, didst thou not fall under the table, tonight? I am surprised at that, indeed.

BELSHAZZAR. Thou art surprised at everything in this world but thine own stupidity.

TOMBSTONE. Even so, O king—

BELSHAZZAR. *Be gone*, I say! If thou art a good physician how sayest thou that I am not well when thou hast not even touched my hand once to find out whether I am dead or alive?

TOMBSTONE. Thy manner hath already gossiped thy condition to me.

BELSHAZZAR. Believe everything that is gossiped to thee in this court and thou wilt soon have a head as big as the temple, carrying it all.

TOMBSTONE. Even so, O king—

[*Enter ABED-ABED, who advances toward the dais.*]

BELSHAZZAR. Ah, Abed-Abed. Come hither. I have something to tell thee. I would that thou hast something to tell me also.

TOMBSTONE. Even so, O king—

BELSHAZZAR. [*In a rage.*] Go! [*He turns graciously to ABED-ABED.*]

ABED-ABED. [*Bowing deeply.*] O king, there is nothing which I can tell thee beyond that which thou already knowest. For thou art a king and therefore knowest everything.

BELSHAZZAR. Forsooth, if I am a king I am not altogether a fool. . . . Thou art wise in reading the heavens, Abed-Abed, which is more than a king can do. So I would that thou readest the heavens for me tonight and tell me what thou seest there, good or bad.

ABED-ABED. Behold, O king, if that is what thou

wishest that will Abed-Abed do. Yea, Abed-Abed will read the heavens for thee tonight, O great and wonderful King Belshazzar, for much does he find written there, oh very much does he find written there indeed.

BELSHAZZAR. Well, what dost thou find written? Speak it out quickly.

ABED-ABED. Behold, that will Abed-Abed do even as his king has commanded him. . . This is what I find written in the heavens tonight; long life to the King Belshazzar and health and happiness and prosperity to the king of the Chaldeans forevermore. Behold, O King Belshazzar, that is what Abed-Abed finds written in the heavens tonight. [*He bows deeply.*]

BELSHAZZAR. Thou art a knave, Abed-Abed. Seven times thou hast read the heavens before and seven times thou hast even told me this same thing. What meanest thou?

ABED-ABED. That even eight times, O great King Belshazzar, have the heavens promised thee prosperity. [*He bows.*]

BELSHAZZAR. Thou hast a ready wit. Thy tongue hath saved thy neck for thee. Nevertheless, I am suspicious of thy flattery. For look you, while I was drinking wine with my friends in the Banquet Hall there came unto me an hand which proceeded to write some words upon the wall. Wherefore, I was frightened, and all my court with me, and I determined to find out the meaning of what had happened. For I confess I do not like what has happened. I fear it hath an ill omen.

ABED-ABED. Thou sayest that an hand came unto thee in the Banquet Hall and wrote upon the wall?

BELSHAZZAR. Yea, an hand such as I have never seen before in my whole life: an hand that was long

and white and terrible to look upon. Forsooth, Abed-Abed, I say unto thee that never in my whole life have I seen such an hand. It frightened me. It frightened the whole court.

TOMBSTONE. O king, now I am sure that thou art troubled with a fever, or thou surely wouldst not say such things. Yea, I know thou hast a fever. Behold, I write it down on my tablet that thou hast a fever. [*He writes.*]

BELSHAZZAR. Perchance I have a fever. If I have then my whole court has a fever with me. For everyone else saw this hand and was as frightened as I.

TOMBSTONE. Now am I *sure* thou hast a fever. No one saw this hand but thee.

BELSHAZZAR. Do not contradict me, Tombstone. The whole court saw the hand and was as frightened as I. . . Is it not so? Did you not all see an hand in the Banquet Chamber, writing on the wall? [*There is silence.*] I say unto you, did you not see an hand writing on the wall of the Banquet Chamber? [*There is silence.*] Cannot you hear? I say unto you, did you not all see an hand? [*There is still silence.*] Answer me! Did you not see an hand?

THE COURT. [*Speaking with precision.*] We saw an hand, we saw an hand.

BELSHAZZAR. So! when thy king asks a question see that you answer it promptly. [*To Tombstone.*] There; didst hear that? It is thyself who hast a fever. Go write thine epitaph on thy forehead now and say, "He died of a fever." [*Laughing.*] Forsooth it is a very proper name thy mother gave thee: Tombstone! Ha, ha, ha. Tombstone! He died of a fever; yea, he was dead already. Ha, ha, ha. I think I am growing witty. [*To the Court.*] Well, why do you not all laugh. Look you, I have just made an excellent joke.

THE COURT. [*Laughing rhythmically.*] Ha, ha, ha; ha, ha, ha; ha-a-a!

BELSHAZZAR. So! When thy king makes a joke, laugh promptly. For of a truth, if you do not laugh how can he know that you taste the savor of his wit?

A VOICE IN THE CROWD. [*Breaking into obscene cachinnation.*] Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

BELSHAZZAR. [*Continuing with scarcely a break as someone hushes the voice.*] Likewise, when thy king makes no joke do not laugh; for that is treason and the punishment thereof is death. [*To the Nubian guards.*] Tonight you will slay the man who has just laughed. [*The Nubian guards lower their spears for an instant to the floor to signal their assent, and re-assume their rigid positions.* BELSHAZZAR turns agreeably to ABED-ABED.] And now, Abed-Abed, since I have told thee this tale of the writing on the wall, what sayest thou to it? Is it a good omen or, forsooth, an ill one? What signifieth it that this hand appeared unto me while I was yet eating and drinking with my friends in the Banquet Hall? Thou art a wise man, Abed-Abed, and skilled in reading signs and wonders. Tell me, wherefor did this hand appear unto me, and why did it write upon the wall?

ABED-ABED. [*Bowing.*] O king, there is nothing to tell thee beyond that which I have already done. Behold, all prophecies are written upon the sky; neither has there been any prophecy written upon the wall of the chamber of a king since the days of the flood. Wherefor, O king, was thy prophecy written even as I have already told it unto thee. And this is the prophecy that was written: Long life to the King Belshazzar, and peace and happiness and prosperity to the king of the Chaldeans and his seed forever and ever. [*He bows.*]

BELSHAZZAR. [*Leaning forward a little way and*

regarding ABED-ABED intently.] Abed-Abed, I have asked of thee a certain question concerning an hand which came unto me a few moments ago and wrote upon the wall of the Banquet Chamber; and if thou canst answer it I will give unto thee great riches. I will make thee very honoured among all men. Yea, I will make thee famous throughout all the land of Chaldea, and beyond, even in other lands so that thy fame will be as great as that of thy king. For I say unto you, I do not like what has happened. I fear it is an ill omen. Abed-Abed, why did this hand appear unto me, and why did it write upon the wall?

ABED-ABED. [*Bowing deeply.*] Behold, O king, all prophecies are written upon the sky; neither has there ever been any prophecy written upon the wall of the chamber of a king—no, not since the days of the flood. Wherefor, now, O king, I say unto thee—

BELSHAZZAR. [*Stamping his foot.*] Enough!

ABED-ABED. [*Looking up in surprise, but continuing after a moment.*] Wherefor, now, O king—

BELSHAZZAR. Enough, I said. [*To the court.*] Send to me the chief Interpreter of Dreams!

ABED-ABED. [*Bowing, and commencing again.*] Wherefor, now, O king—

BELSHAZZAR. [*Angrily.*] Where are thine ears, Abed-Abed? I said, enough! [*Turning to BARA-BARA who has stepped toward the dais.*] Ah, Bara-Bara, come here. [*BARA-BARA advances and bows deeply.*] I have a question to ask of thee. Thou art a wise man, and understandest many strange things which are hid from the minds of other men. [*BARA-BARA bows.*] Thou hast already heard the tale of that which happened tonight in the Banquet Hall. Well, I have sent for thee to tell me what it means. What has thou to say to thy king?

BARA-BARA. [*Bowing very deeply.*] Behold, O

king, this is what Bara-Bara has to say to his king. Behold, O King Balshazzar, thou art the most wonderful king in all the world.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Openly pleased.*] Ha, that is indeed a very pretty thing to say to thy king, Bara-Bara—a very pretty thing indeed. But tonight I do not care to hear pretty things. I would rather that thou wouldst tell me a wise one.

BARA-BARA. [*Bowing deeply.*] Behold, O king, that have I already done. For a pretty thing in thine ear, O great King Belshazzar, ever is wise.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Scowling.*] That is not so pretty of thee, Bara-Bara; and tomorrow when thou lickest up thy length of dust in the court-yard to pay thee for thine impudence, perchance thou'lt see it was neither so very wise. . . . Well, tell me the meaning of that which has happened, and tell it quickly. I would go back now to the Banquet Hall and drink more wine. I am becoming thirsty.

BARA-BARA. [*Bowing.*] O king, what is it that thou wouldst even now have me tell thee?

BELSHAZZAR. If I knew, myself, think you that I would be wearying my tongue with conversation? Thou art an interpreter of dreams. *I am a king.*

BARA-BARA. That is true, O king. I am an interpreter of dreams and thou art a king. Wherefor is it meet that thou shouldst not understand any of these things, neither shouldst thou know anything at all of the mysteries of this world. For no king who is a true king will soil his mind with learning, else, if he did, would he no longer remain a king. Nevertheless, O great King Belshazzar, I say unto thee if thou hast not a dream how am I to interpret it?

BELSHAZZAR. [*Making an annoyed clicking with his tongue.*] Tut, tut, tut! Have I not already told thee my dream an hundred times. Didst thou not

hear me say how I saw an hand writing upon the wall of the Banquet Chamber? What is the matter with thee, Bara-Bara? Canst thou not smell an onion when it is stuck under thy nose?

BARA-BARA. [*With great dignity.*] Behold, O king, I am an interpreter of dreams, not a smeller of onions. Neither, O king, am I able to interpret that which has happened except it has happened in a dream. This hand which came unto thee in the Banquet Hall did not come unto thee in a dream. Wherefor there is nothing for me to interpret.

BELSHAZZAR. Bara-Bara, I have asked of thee a plain question and I would that thou wouldst answer it like a man; for until I know the meaning of this which has happened I dare not go back to my friends and make merry with them. I have called Tombstone to explain the meaning of this hand, and he could not tell me what it meant; I have called Abed-Abed, and he could not tell me; I have called my court, and not one of them could tell me, either. Then I called thee, Bara-Bara, for all the others have failed me, and not one of this whole court can tell me why an hand appeared and wrote upon the wall. Thou art a very wise man, Bara-Bara. If, now, thou canst tell me the meaning of this which has happened here tonight I will make thee also a very rich one,—yea, the richest in the whole court. Yea, I say unto thee, if thou wilt but interpret the meaning of this hand for me thou wilt never be required to interpret another thing, neither for me nor for any other man; for I will straightway give thee as much gold as thou wilt have, and forty slaves and eunuchs to carry it to thy house for thee. That I promise thee, Bara-Bara, as I am a king. [*A pause.*] Dost hear? [*A pause.*] I say, dost hear?

BARA-BARA. [*Bowing.*] Behold, O king, I hear.

BELSHAZZAR. [*After a pause.*] Well? Canst thou not tell me, either?

BARA-BARA. [*Bowing.*] Behold, O king, that have I already done.

BELSHAZZAR. How is that?

BARA-BARA. Why, behold, O king, I have but only just explained to thee that there is nothing at all to explain. An hand came unto thee in the Banquet Hall and did then proceed to write upon the wall, so that thou wert frightened thereby and all thy court with thee. Is that not so?

BELSHAZZAR. Yea, that is so.

BARA-BARA. Well, O king, is that so wonderful? I say unto thee, is an hand so fearful a thing that a court should be frightened by it, or is writing which thou thyself cannot read so bewildering to thy brain that thou shouldst be stricken with a fever deciphering it? Behold, O king, there are many languages which thou canst not read; wherefore, then, shouldst thou be terrified of this one? Likewise, an hand is not so foreign to thine eye that thou shouldst tremble at seeing one merely write upon the wall. Why, is not an hand the most ordinary thing in all the world? Behold, thou hast even two of them thyself. I have two of them. Yea, there are a thousand hands on every side of thee in thy court tonight, and thou art not afraid. [*Pityingly.*] And yet, O king, when *one* hand appears unto thee in the Banquet Hall thou art suddenly stricken ill of a fever. Of a truth I fear, as Tombstone said, thou art not well.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Clipping off each word sharply as with a pair of steel scissors.*] Bara-Bara, I have asked of thee a plain question. What was the meaning of this hand?

BARA-BARA. [*Bowing deeply.*] Behold, O king, but have I not just told thee?

BELSHAZZAR. [*With growing anger.*] No! thou hast told me nothing at all. I am tired of the trickery of thy tongue. Come, now: speak out plainly. I will give thee one more chance. What was the meaning of this hand?

BARA-BARA. [*Bowing very deeply indeed.*] Behold, O king, but have I not even explained very carefully unto thee already that—?

BELSHAZZAR. [*Cutting him short and accusing him with a roar.*] Thou dost not know the meaning of it. That is it. I see it now. Why, thou art no wiser than Abed-Abed and all the other fools of this court. Thou canst not read one simple sign for thy king—thou! the Chief Interpreter of Dreams. Bah! Why thou hast not even got enough brains to make up a meaning for that which thou canst not interpret.

BARA-BARA. [*Timidly.*] Behold, O king—if thou wishest—I think perhaps I can now make up a meaning for thee—if thou wishest.

BELSHAZZAR. [*With unspeakable contempt.*] Thou dost! Oh, thou dost! Well, I will not strain thine imagination so far. I am too tender-hearted. [*With an abrupt change in manner.*] No! I have been tricked and made a fool of long enough for one evening, Bara-Bara. Nay, I have been tricked too long already. It is not a wise thing to try to trick a king, Bara-Bara. Sometimes he loses his temper. And when he loses his temper someone else is apt to lose his head. . . . Send me some one now with the brains of a goat—if there be any such in this court of imbeciles. Yea, send me any one at all who is not thought wise in the matter of mysteries; and tell him for me that if he can explain this thing which has happened tonight I will pay him whatsoever he demands, unto a thousand pieces of silver. Nay, unto ten thousand pieces of silver. Nay, I will make it

more. [*He raises his voice and addresses the whole court.*] Unto the first man among you who will tell me the meaning of why this hand appeared before me in the Banquet Chamber, I say unto you I will offer as much gold as a pair of oxen can carry to his house.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. The king is vexed tonight.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Yea, I fear he has been drinking too much wine.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. That is doubtless true, else he would not be offering to give away so much money.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

BELSHAZZAR. [*After a pause, as the laughter dies away.*] Well? Have I not offered enough? Or would you perhaps like me to throw in my crown, beside? [*There is a pause.*] Well, cannot you speak? [*There is a pause.*] I say, cannot any of you speak when your king asks a question? I have just offered a large sum of money as a reward to the first man among you who can tell me what I desire to know. Perhaps I have offered too much money. That is possible. I know it is not wise to offer much money for anything you desire, because those to whom you offer it will suspect that that which you are seeking from them is valuable. But no matter. My offer is still good. I am only curious in this matter of the hand, it is true. Nevertheless, I offer the reward. Well, which of you claims it? [*There is a pause.*] I forgot to say that I should first warn you not all to speak at once, otherwise I can not properly attend to each man's remarks. [*No one stirs.*] So; that is it; one at a time; no undue pushing or hurrying; everything in decency and order. [*He pauses,*

while the court shifts on its feet uneasily and BELSHAZZAR surveys them with contempt.] Well, are you all as dumb as you look? [A pause. BELSHAZZAR suddenly raises his voice angrily, and stamps his foot.] I say, is there not one man here who can answer the king his question? [He stops short, his voice sharpened to a keen edge of impatience and annoyance. MORRACA, who has come through the door-way from the hall during the close of his final remark, steps forward confidently and moves toward the dais.]

MORRACA. Yea, there is one outside. Shall I bring him in?

BELSHAZZAR. [*Startled and angered.*] Morraca! What art thou doing in here?

MORRACA. [*Coolly.*] Do not stare at me so strangely. Have I not the right to come and go as I please? Am I not thy wife?

BELSHAZZAR. Morraca, thou well knowest it is not meet that the queen of the Chaldeans should ever show herself in this chamber unattended.

MORRACA. [*Laughing.*] That is an ancient law. I am a modern queen: I show myself where I please. And I am attended. I am very well attended. David is just outside the door-way now, gazing on the moon, waiting for me.

BELSHAZZAR. Hum. I do not like men who gaze on the moon. They are either very ugly or very beautiful. If they are very ugly I do not like them; and if they are very beautiful I do not like them either.

MORRACA. Thou wilt like David, nevertheless. He can interpret dreams.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Scowling.*] No! No man can interpret dreams. I have found that out tonight. They are all fools. . . Go back to thy moon-gazer. Do not bother me now.

MORRACA. Then shall I not bring David in?

BELSHAZZAR. Why shouldst thou bring him in? If this man says he can read a sign he is only a liar like all the rest—like Abed-Abed here, and Bara-Bara. [*He glares at them sullenly before going on.*] No man can read signs, I say. If any man says he can read signs he is a liar. And I do not like thee standing here in this public chamber either. Thou art ever doing something indiscreet and ridiculous.

MORRACA. Ah, thou art truly never quite so wise, darling, as when thou art just a little drunk. . . I will not stay here any longer. I am sure that David has already become impatient for my return. [*She starts to leave.*]

BELSHAZZAR. [*Stopping her.*] Morraca!

MORRACA. Yea, darling.

BELSHAZZAR. Morraca, where art thou going?

MORRACA. To talk to my moon-gazer.

BELSHAZZAR. Ah, yes, yes. Hum . . . I see. . .

MORRACA. Thou art surely not jealous, now, art thou?

BELSHAZZAR. Jealous? Can a king be jealous of a slave?

MORRACA. Perhaps, if he has enough imagination to be. . .

BELSHAZZAR. No, I am not jealous. I would not flatter any man by being jealous of him. Thou knowest that, Morraca. But I think I would like to speak for a moment with this fellow, nonetheless.

MORRACA. To see whether he is perchance very ugly or very beautiful?

BELSHAZZAR. No; to see if perchance he is very wise or very foolish.

MORRACA. [*Easily.*] Oh, that is same thing. [*She goes to the doorway on the right and calls melodiously.*] David! David, come here a moment. The king wishes to speak with thee.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Warningly.*] If he is not very wise, Morraca, as thou sayest, I can tell thee thou wilt soon be sorry thou broughtest him in here, for I will very quickly make a fool of him.

MORRACA. Be careful darling, that thou dost not make a fool of thyself, first. [*Calling.*] David! . . .

A VOICE IN THE CROWD. [*Enjoying the witticism.*] Ha, ha; ha, ha; ha, ha.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Thundering.*] Silence, there! Dost think this is a public entertainment for fools?

MORRACA. It will soon be if thou canst not learn not to make it so. Dost thou not know that when a king and queen commence quarreling in public an empire dies laughing in its sleeve.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Grumbling.*] Mine never does, worse luck. Nobody in this court ever dies of anything but the executioner.

MORRACA. What a charming boast! And what a sweet mood thou art in tonight, darling. I almost want to kiss thee. . . [*Calling*] David!

BELSHAZZAR. [*Boastfully.*] I will be in any mood I please, Morraca. Am I not king of the Chaldeans? Have I not more slaves to do my bidding than any king since my father Nebuchadnezzar?

A VOICE OUTSIDE. The Lord of Hosts reigneth. Him only shalt thou serve.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Starting.*] What was that?

MORRACA. I do not know. I heard nothing. . .

BELSHAZZAR. I thought I heard a voice in the corridor just now.

MORRACA. A voice?

BELSHAZZAR. Yea, a voice.

MORRACA. I heard nothing.

A VOICE OUTSIDE. The Lord of Hosts hath appointed a day when all the ends of the earth shall

fear Him, and all the kings of this world shall fall down before Him and call Him holy.

BELSHAZZAR. Who is that speaking, Morraca?

MORRACA. How should I know who it is that is speaking? Perhaps it is thy conscience. . . [*Calling*] David!

BELSHAZZAR. That is ridiculous. I have no conscience. I am a king.

MORRACA. Oh! . . . [*Calling*] David! David!

BELSHAZZAR. Listen, Morraca. I think it is speaking again.

MORRACA. I hear nothing. It is thy conscience troubling thee. That is all.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Angrily.*] I say I have no conscience. It is a voice I hear. Listen!

A VOICE OUTSIDE. Behold, though they are mighty yet are they soon destroyed, for their strength is as grass which the Lord shall wither away.

BELSHAZZAR. There! Is that not a voice?

MORRACA. Yea, it is a voice, truly. But I fear it is the voice of thy conscience. . .

BELSHAZZAR. Morraca! do not be a fool.

MORRACA. Ah, listen! it is speaking again.

THE VOICE OUTSIDE. [*Growing louder.*] With His wrath, I say, will He destroy them. Yea, even in the heat of His hot displeasure will He consume such as are of a proud and froward heart. Behold, kings and emperors will He destroy with a flaming fire, and not one of them shall be saved.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Uneasily.*] What nonsense the fellow is talking. Didst hear what he said, Morraca? He said that kings and emperors would be destroyed with a flaming fire. Ha, ha! Is that not absurd? Why, how could a king be destroyed with a flaming fire when he has as many slaves as I to protect him. It is ridiculous to say such things, is it not, Morraca?

I wonder who the fellow can be. . . [*Angrily.*] Morraca, why art thou suddenly smiling so strangely?

MORRACA. Ah. . . Was I smiling strangely? I did not mean to. . .

BELSHAZZAR. Thy lips just now seemed full of strange secrets which no man could read. [*Slowly.*] It was almost as though thou sawest an enemy creeping up behind me to kill me, and thou smilest at him, but would not give an alarm.

MORRACA. Oh! what a horrid idea.

BELSHAZZAR. Perhaps it was a trick of the lip. I do not know what it was.

MORRACA. Yea, it was a trick of the lip. That was it. Thou art ever imagining some foolish thing.

BELSHAZZAR. Even so, I do not like to see thee smile so strangely, Morraca. It makes me very troubled. And I have had trouble enough for one night. Never before have I been so disturbed at a banquet—never!

THE VOICE OUTSIDE. Behold! For a little time they shall prosper and wax great in all the land; but I say unto you their doom is not far off—

BELSHAZZAR. [*Screaming out angrily.*] That accursed voice again! Morraca, why dost thou stand there smiling so strangely? Morraca, I will not have thee smiling at me so strangely. Dost hear? *I will not have it.*

A GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. The king is very wroth tonight.

ANOTHER GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. I do not think him quite right in his head.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. He saw an hand in the Banquet Chamber but a short time since, writing upon the wall.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. And now he is hearing a voice. Such things are not healthy.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. I thought I heard some one calling in the outer corridor, a moment ago.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Who would be calling? There is no one outside but the guards. It was the wind you heard.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Yea, doubtless it was only the wind.

MORRACA. [*Still smiling.*] Ah. . . a conscience is a very troublous thing, is it not my darling. . . ?

BELSHAZZAR. Morraca, I say I will not have thee smiling so strangely. It frightens me. It is almost as though thou wert smiling secretly at some enemy who stood behind me.

MORRACA. Do not be absurd. Thy conscience is troubling thee. That is all.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Boldly.*] I have no conscience. Of course I have no conscience. I am a king. Perhaps I am afraid. Well, why should I not be afraid? Did not an hand come before me tonight and write upon the wall, and did not a voice also cry out saying, Behold, kings and emperors shall be burned with a flaming fire? Did such things ever happen to a king before? Nay, Morraca, I do not like what has happened here tonight. I fear it hath a very ill omen—but I have no conscience.

MORRACA. [*Slowly.*] It is thy conscience troubling thee, I say. The Lord hath touched thy heart.

BELSHAZZAR. It is not true! Thou liest!

MORRACA. The Lord is troubling thee greatly because of thine evil doing.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Uneasily.*] Morraca—why dost thou say such things to me? Thou knowest there is no God.

THE VOICE OUTSIDE. Behold the Lord hath ap-

pointed a day when all the ends of the earth shall fear Him—

BELSHAZZAR. Ah!

THE VOICE OUTSIDE. He also hath prepared a scourge for such of them as do not confess Him and bless His holy name.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Openly frightened.*] There is sorcery in this place tonight. Some evil thing is about to befall us. I—I feel afraid. . . Ah, thou art smiling at me again, Morraca. Thy lips are full of evil secrets which I can not read. Morraca!

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. [*Aside.*] Hum. I do not fancy this business. It is not healthy.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Nay, it is not healthy. Do you know I fancied I heard a voice myself a moment ago.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. A voice? You mean—in the outer corridor?

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. [*Hesitating.*] No. . . It seemed—it seemed rather to be coming from—above.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. [*Aghast, he points heavenward.*] From above! Oh!

BELSHAZZAR. Ha! thou art in league with the devil, Morraca. [*She only continues to smile at him insolently.*] Verily, I believe thou art in league with the devil. Why dost thou stand there smiling so? Why dost thou not call David? *Morraca!*

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. [*In an awed whisper.*] It was the voice of God speaking. I believe it was the voice of God.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Oh, I do not know. Probably it was only the wind I heard.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. No, it was the voice of God. Some evil is about to befall us, I am sure of it.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Infuriated at her continued silence.*] *Morraca!*

MORRACA. [*Calmly.*] Well, I have called David for thee. What more wouldst thou have me do?

BELSHAZZAR. Call him again.

MORRACA. Art thou very sure thou wishest me to?

BELSHAZZAR. Thou smilest at me strangely. I say I will not have it. Why should I not wish thee to?

MORRACA. Thou shouldst perhaps know that better than I. David is very wise.

BELSHAZZAR. That is well. He can tell me the meaning of the hand.

MORRACA. Yea, he can tell thee the meaning of the hand. Nothing is hid from his eyes either in heaven or on earth.

BELSHAZZAR. Well, why dost thou not call him?

MORRACA. [*Slowly.*] He is very wise. Nothing is hid from his eyes—not even the secrets of thy heart.

BELSHAZZAR. Ah! thou art smiling again very strangely.

MORRACA. It must be terrible to have nothing hid from one's eyes. Thinkest thou not, darling?

BELSHAZZAR. I cannot tell.

MORRACA. To know everything, I think, must be very terrible. . . But I will call him again if thou wishest. I will not keep thee waiting any longer. [*She moves slowly toward the corridor again.*]

BELSHAZZAR. [*Making an involuntary clutching movement with his hand.*] Ah!

MORRACA. [*Turning.*] Well, thou art not afraid, art thou?

BELSHAZZAR. Afraid?

MORRACA. I thought perhaps thou wert afraid to know the meaning of the hand.

BELSHAZZAR. Do not be absurd. . . do not be absurd.

MORRACA. Why, I believe thou art afraid. Why, thou art trembling like a leaf.

BELSHAZZAR. Nay. . . I am not trembling, Morraca. It is only that I felt a draught just now.

MORRACA. A draught?

BELSHAZZAR. Yea, I am thirsty. . . I think I will go back to the Banquet Hall and drink more wine. I cannot be waiting out here forever.

MORRACA. Now am I sure thou art afraid to meet my moon-gazer. Thou art afraid to meet him because of what I have just told thee.

BELSHAZZAR. Morraca, do not be absurd. . . I say that I am thirsty. That is all.

MORRACA. [*Insistently.*] Thou art afraid of my moon-gazer because he is a servant of God.

BELSHAZZAR. Morraca!

MORRACA. Thou art afraid of him because he can reveal the evil which is in thy heart.

BELSHAZZAR. Morraca. . . I will not have thee saying such things before my friends. . . They are not true. There is no God, therefore there can be no servant of God.

MORRACA. Thou liest in thy heart. There is a God. Thou knowest there is a God.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Doggedly.*] Nay, there is no God. (*A beautiful youth walks in from the outer corridor and stands before the king.*) I call all my court to witness what I have said. There is no God! [*He stops suddenly, confronted by the youth.*]

THE YOUTH. [*Whose voice is like the voice that was heard outside.*] Though they mock Him yet will they one day worship Him. And I say unto you that day is not far off.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. [*Astonished.*] Why, it is the same voice that we heard before.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. It is the voice from heaven!

THE YOUTH. With His wrath in that day will He also destroy them. Kings and emperors will He destroy with a flaming fire. They shall be cut down like grass. They shall wither away.

BELSHAZZAR. Who art thou?

THE YOUTH. For a little time they shall prosper and wax great in all the land. They shall drink from golden goblets and make merry together in the night season. But I say unto you their doom is not far off. And when the Lord smiteth His enemies let the unrighteous man shake with fear.

BELSHAZZAR. Who art thou that thou darest to come here before thy king?

THE YOUTH. Behold, kings are great upon the earth but the Lord of Hosts sitteth in the sky. He will come down out of His heaven. He will come down and smite the evil doer with a rod of iron. With a scorching flame out of His mouth will he consume the wicked. They shall suddenly perish.

BELSHAZZAR. I say, dost thou not know that it is treason to speak thus boldly to a king?

THE YOUTH. The Lord of Hosts reigneth. Him only shalt thou fear.

BELSHAZZAR. Dost thou not know that this is the court of Belshazzar, king of all the Chaldeans? I will have thee thrown into a dungeon for thine impudence.

THE YOUTH. Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Turning pale.*] What is that thou art saying?

THE YOUTH. Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. Behold, it was written upon the wall.

BELSHAZZAR. I—I do not know what thou art saying. I think thou art mad, otherwise would I surely

have thee thrown into a dungeon. But since thou art mad I will let thee go. [*To the court.*] This fellow is mad. Have him taken away.

MORRACA. [*Triumphantly.*] Ah! I knew thou wouldst be afraid of the servant of God. I knew thou wouldst be afraid of the servant of God.

BELSHAZZAR. Morraca! Be still!

MORRACA. Thou art afraid of him. Thou art trembling like a leaf. Thou art afraid of my moon-gazer because he can read the evil which is in thy heart.

BELSHAZZAR. Morraca!

THE YOUTH. Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. Behold, O king, was it not even written so upon the wall?

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. [*Aside.*] I do not like this business.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Nay, it is not healthy. It hath an evil odor.

THE YOUTH. It was written upon the wall, O king. Yea, it was even written upon thy heart. And what was written will quickly come to pass.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. What is he saying now?

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. He said, What is written will quickly come to pass.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. That is a strange thing to say.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. It is very strange. I think the fellow is mad.

THE YOUTH. Thou art afraid, O king. Thou hast many slaves but not all of them can save thee. Behold, it is well thou art afraid.

BELSHAZZAR. I cannot tell what thou art saying. I think thou art mad. [*To the court.*] This fellow is mad. Have him taken away.

THE YOUTH. Thou art afraid to hear what I say. Behold, it is well thou art afraid for the hand which thou sawest tonight was the hand of God.

BELSHAZZAR. Thou liest.

THE YOUTH. I speak the truth. The hand which thou sawest was the hand of God and the writing on the wall was the judgment of heaven.

BELSHAZZAR. No! Thou liest.

THE YOUTH. Behold, the writing on the wall is the judgment of heaven and the words of the writing are Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin, which being translated mean, Tonight shall the king of the Chaldeans be slain.

BELSHAZZAR. No, no, no. It is not true. Thou art lying to me. [*To the court.*] Have the fellow taken away. He is mad. He does not know what he is saying.

MORRACA. Ah. . . I knew thou wouldst be afraid of my moon-gazer. I knew thou wouldst be afraid of him when he told thee the meaning of the hand.

BELSHAZZAR. Thou art trying to frighten me, Morraca. Thou art trying to frighten me. . .

MORRACA. I am not trying to frighten thee. It is thy conscience which has frightened thee. . .

BELSHAZZAR. Ah. . .

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. The king seems very alarmed.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Yea, he seems very alarmed.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Is the fellow mad?

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. I fear he speaks with too much wisdom to be mad.

THE YOUTH. Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. Behold, it was written on the wall. And what is written will come to pass even as it is written.

BELSHAZZAR. No! It is a lie. I say it is a damnable lie.

MORRACA. Thou art afraid to die; so thou hidest thy fear behind a fury of words. Thou art so afraid of the judgment which was written tonight on the wall of the Banquet Chamber that thou art trembling like a leaf in the wind. Thou sayest there is no God, but only with thy lips dost thou say it. In thy heart thou knowest there is a God even as thy court knows it. Because thou hast sinned in the sight of God and hast drunk from the golden goblets which hold the blood of the holy sacrifice He will surely punish thee. Yea, He will slay thee tonight even as David here has told thee.

BELSHAZZAR. No! I say it is all a lie. It is some trick to frighten me. I will not believe a word of it. [*Shouting in a rage.*] I say it is all a lie.

MORRACA. Thy court does not believe it is a lie.

BELSHAZZAR. No! That is not true, either. My court knows it is a lie, even as I. [*To the court.*] Is it not so? Is it not false that a king can be slain for drinking from the gold and silver goblets? [*Silence.*] Answer me and say that it is false. [*Silence.*] Answer me! [*Silence.*]

THE YOUTH. Words are the judgment of men, O king, but silence is the judgment of God.

BELSHAZZAR. It is a lie. I say it is a lie!

THE YOUTH. Prepare to meet thy God.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Gathering courage around him carefully like a robe.*] Nay, I will not be frightened by words. Neither will I be frightened by lack of them. Am I not king of the Chaldeans? Behold, I am king of the Chaldeans and owner of more slaves than any king since my father Nebuchadnezzar. [*He gathers up his robe and rises majestically from his seat.*] I have been foolish tonight, my friends.

I have seen writing where no writing was. I have listened to the voice of fear, and I have been afraid. I will return now to the Banquet Chamber and drink wine and we will make merry together. Out of my gold and silver goblet I will drink wine and with the cups which I have taken from the temple we will all make merry together. Thus will we show our contempt for this fellow's idle prattle and prove ourselves noble even as we are called noble. Come!

MORRACA. I pray thee not to do this. It is evil in the sight of God.

BELSHAZZAR. [*With dignity.*] He that is afraid of God let him follow God. He that honours his king let him follow his king.

MORRACA. I pray thee not to go into the Banquet Chamber again. Before all the court I warn thee not to go there.

BELSHAZZAR. I have been foolish for a time. Now I will redeem myself from my foolishness. . . Come! [*He walks majestically toward the Banquet Chamber. The court moves uncertainly after him.*]

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Art thou returning?

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. I do not know. I am afraid.

BELSHAZZAR. He that is afraid of God let him follow God. He that is not afraid of God let him follow me.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. I am afraid, also. But the king is looking at us. Let us return for just a little while. God will forgive us for that.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. I believe thou art wise. God will understand.

MORRACA. I have prayed thee twice not to return to the Banquet Chamber, but if thou wilt return God will see to it that my hands are clean.

BELSHAZZAR. [*Pompously, as he goes out.*] He that is afraid of God let him follow God. He that is not afraid of God let him follow me. [*The procession passes through the doorway while NIN and RAB hold their spears high in the air in salute. At length the room is emptied of all but MORRACA and DAVID and the two Nubian slaves.*]

MORRACA. I have prayed him not to return. God will see to it that my hands art clean.

DAVID. Thou hast prayed him not to return. God will see to it that thy hands art clean.

MORRACA. Ah! thou art very wise and very wonderful, David. Thou art my beautiful moon-gazer. Thou art beautiful by day, but I think thou art still more beautiful by night. . .

DAVID. Thou art the queen. All beauty belongs unto the queen.

MORRACA. Nay, David, thou art more beautiful than any one else in this whole court. I think thou art beautiful enough to be made a king.

DAVID. The kingdoms of this world are vanity.

MORRACA. Thou art very beautiful, David, but I see thou art not very wise. It is wonderful to be a king. In all the world there is nothing more wonderful. . . David, wouldst thou not like to be made a king?

DAVID. If thou wert a queen in my court, then perhaps would I desire to be a king. But, O queen, thou knowest that can never happen.

MORRACA. [*Suddenly.*] The moon is beautiful to-night, David.

DAVID. Yea, it is beautiful. It is more beautiful than anything except thy face, O queen.

MORRACA. With such a moon to help a queen, David, anything might happen. . . David, I would that thou wouldst go back into the courtyard for a

little while and gaze on the face of the moon and speak to it for me.

DAVID. O queen, what should I say to the moon for thee?

MORRACA. Say to it, "O moon, whatever is beautiful in thy sight is holy, and whatever is ugly is evil. Hide not thy face from thy queen tonight, neither do thou wash it with any tears."

DAVID. O queen, those are words which I cannot understand. But if it will give thee any pleasure I will say them for thee.

MORRACA. Ah! thou art my beautiful David! Thou art beautiful in the daytime, and thou art even more beautiful in the night. Thou art wise, also. Yea, thy wisdom tonight has been greater perhaps than even thou knowest. . . Go, now. Gaze on the moon for me and say what I have bidden thee to say. And when I call thee again. . . [*She hesitates.*]

DAVID. Yea, O queen?

MORRACA. Then do thou answer as a king. . . Now, go!

DAVID. [*Chanting the words as he disappears into the courtyard.*] O moon! O moon, whatever is beautiful in thy sight—[*His voice dies away.*]

MORRACA. [*Who immediately approaches the Nubian slaves.*] Now, then: you have heard the prophecy which was made tonight concerning thy king?

THE SLAVES. [*Speaking together.*] O queen, we have heard the prophecy.

MORRACA. What is the prophecy? Repeat it.

THE SLAVES. [*Together.*] Tonight, O queen, will the king of the Chaldeans be slain.

MORRACA. That is well. And it is a true prophecy for tonight you are even going to slay him.

THE SLAVES. [*Staggered.*] O, queen!

MORRACA. Listen to me. The king is feasting. He is drinking wine out of the gold and silver goblet and is making merry with all his friends. It is evil to do such things and God has said that He will punish the King Belshazzar for his wickedness. Therefore do not say "O queen!" but go and do this deed quickly.

RAB. O queen, to kill a king is a very fearful thing.

NIN. O queen, it is written, Thou shalt do no murder.

MORRACA. Fools! I do not ask you to kill the king yourselves. It is God who will kill the king. You are only to help Him.

RAB. [*Hesitating.*] That may be true, O queen. But how can we know that it is true?

MORRACA. The queen has said it is true. That is enough for any slave to know. . . Come, now: do this deed and you shall be rewarded.

RAB. O queen, tonight we have seen many strange things come to pass, and we believe what thou sayest to be true. Yet we are afraid—

MORRACA. How! Are you afraid to do that which God has commanded you to do?

RAB. Nay, O queen. But we are afraid of what the court may say.

NIN. O queen, we may be killed ourselves for doing such a deed.

MORRACA. The wrath of God is more terrible than the wrath of men. . . But do not be afraid that you will suffer punishment. Do as I have told you and all will be well.

RAB. O queen, thou art a great queen. What wouldst thou have us do?

MORRACA. The king is feasting and his companions are full of wine. Creep in softly behind him

and while he is not looking stab him boldly with your spears.

NIN. O queen, thou wilt see that we are not punished if we do this thing? Thou wilt see that we are rewarded?

MORRACA. Unto the first of you that stabs the king with your spear God will surely give a reward in heaven. And unto the first of you that creeps into the Banquet Chamber without making an alarm the queen will offer a new loin cloth and a dozen pieces of silver.

RAB. O queen, thou art a great queen. Thou hast spoken.

NIN. O queen, God is a great God. We will do this thing which He has commanded of us. [*The slaves commence to creep forward.*]

MORRACA. Wait! . . . Wait! . . . He is getting up from the table. He has his hands over his eyes. He is running this way. . . Wait. . . Wait. . . Stab him as he enters.

BELSHAZZAR. [*From the Banquet Chamber there has suddenly come the sound of a man's voice, shouting in a horrible fear. Almost immediately BELSHAZZAR staggers through the portal, screaming.*] Take it away, take it away. . . I cannot stand seeing it any— [NIN, with his spear carefully balanced, lunges at the KING and kills him instantly. He assumes his old position while the court surges in. The FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT advances but draws back in alarm.]

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. The king is slain, the king is slain.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. [*Spreading the alarm.*] The king is slain, behold the king is slain.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. It is the hand of God which has killed him.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Of a truth, I believe it is the hand of God.

TOMBSTONE. [*Kneeling hastily at BELSHAZZAR's side.*] O king, give me thy hand. O king, thy hand!

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Look you, it was written that the king should be slain.

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. And behold, he was slain.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Is not prophecy a wonderful thing?

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. Behold, it is a very wonderful thing indeed.

MORRACA. God has killed your king for his wickedness, even as it was prophesied he would be killed. Ye have seen to it that my hands are clean. . . Go, therefore, and empty the gold and silver goblets that were taken from the temple. Go and empty them quickly.

[*The court, dazed, commences to move away slowly, leaving TOMBSTONE at the side of the KING. A sudden hush falls over the court. MORRACA walks to the doorway leading to the outer court and stands there. From a distance there comes the sound of DAVID's voice.*]

DAVID. O moon. . . whatever is beautiful in thy sight is holy. Hide not thy face tonight from thy queen, O moon, neither do thou wash it with any tears. . .

MORRACA. [*Walking out slowly.*] David! . . . David, I am calling thee. . .

ROMAIN ROLLAND AS A DRAMATIST

The history of Romain Rolland's development as a literary artist is the history of the spiritual evolution of a man at war with the stubborn forces of his day and with himself. In order to understand the many-sided author of *Jean-Christophe* one must examine the earlier works.

These are, roughly speaking, divided into two groups: the historical, critical, and biographical books, on the one hand, and the plays, on the other. Romain Rolland's works on music are notable, not primarily as contributions to history, but as side-lights upon his own personality: the lives of Handel, Beethoven, Wolff, and the history of early opera, reveal the earnest soul of the author in quest of Truth rather than the inquirer into facts. The lives of Michelangelo and Tolstoi—especially the latter—are still more autobiographical.

Tolstoi is certainly the greatest single influence in the life of M. Rolland; his book on *The People's Theater*, and all his sixteen plays, may well be considered as emanating from Tolstoi.

Rolland was first drawn to the theatre in his quest for entertainment suited to the masses. The dramatic art of the past—the best plays in the world—he declared to be the products of the aristocracy, suited primarily to the cultured few. He found nothing acceptable for the workingman, and with characteristic vigor he set himself the task of writing such plays for his ideal People's Theatre.

That he was not very successful can hardly be a

matter for surprise: he did not entirely understand the workingman's viewpoint. Rolland was not a man of the people, himself, and I fancy that in spite of his efforts he condescended to his public. This was also Tolstoi's fault. The absurd *What Is Art?* was first published during M. Rolland's early career, and the young man adopted the Russian's principal contentions. Art for art's sake was a worn-out and wicked formula: we must have art for morality's sake! There was something pathetically provincial in the notion.

And yet in spite of the perverted ideas inherited from Tolstoi, M. Rolland managed to write four or five plays of high intrinsic value. His two volumes of "revolutionary plays" reveal perhaps not the finished technique of a Sardou, but at least a dramatic sense that is remarkable in a man whose firsthand knowledge of the stage was very limited.

Danton, *The Fourteenth of July*, and *The Wolves* are indeed good reading-plays; but they are more than that: with the proper actors and intelligent stage management, they would prove effective stage-plays. It is the function of the theatre to project character in a certain manner, through the medium of an interesting story. Rolland's best plays reveal to us a series of characters as vital as any in contemporary French drama.

The Wolves is Rolland's most "dramatic" play. The plot is more closely knit than that of *Danton*; the central idea is driven home with considerable skill; while the characters stand self-revealed in the clear light of truth.

Romain Rolland has devoted the past fifteen years to the composition of his great novel, but in a letter which I received not many weeks ago he said he had written a new play, called *L'Ame de Buridan*, an

Aristophanic satirical comedy. He intimated that he had not yet given up the idea of writing for the theatre. He is still in quest of the right artistic medium for his thoughts. It will be interesting to see whether his new play is another play consciously written for the people, or a drama for the general public. The point of view is everything.

BARRETT H. CLARK.

THE WOLVES

A Play in Three Acts

by

ROMAIN ROLLAND

(Translated by Barrett H. Clark)

ACT I.

The scene is laid in Mayence in 1793 in the great hall of the Hôtel du roi d'Angleterre, which serves as General Staff Headquarters.

There is a door to the left, and two to the right, one of which is double, and leads out upon the stairway. Beyond a large window at the back are seen the trees of a public square. In one corner of the room is a large tiled stove, in which a fire is burning. The walls are covered with placards, proclamations, and Republican pictures. The tables are strewn with maps, papers, food and sabres. Everything suggests a badly kept inn, or a camp after a battle.

Throughout the play, the boom of cannon and the rattle of muskets are heard outside; the tread of passing troops, music, singing, and officers' commands—all the noise and confusion of a besieged city. This is the dominant note of the play.

TEULIER, D'OYRON, VERRAT, CHAPELAS, BUQUET, VIDALOT, and JEAN-AMABLE, *Republican officers, are in council, presided over by Representative QUESNEL. Confusion reigns. QUESNEL makes frantic efforts to quiet the officers. D'OYRON, calm and ironic, sits a little apart from the others.*

OFFICERS. We are betrayed!

QUESNEL. Peace, citizens, peace! [*His voice is lost in the uproar.*]

VERRAT. [*Striking the table with his fist.*] Custine has betrayed us!

QUESNEL. You have no right to say—

VERRAT. [*More vehemently than before.*] Custine has betrayed us! He promised to defend Mayence, but he allows the enemy to cut us off! He leaves us to sink or swim, and he would as soon see us sink as not.

QUESNEL. Peace! What are you afraid of? Mayence cannot be taken. We have food and ammunition for at least two months more. And do you think the Convention would allow the flower of the French army to perish? Patience! You know Custine—you know him well. The old devil has more than one trick in his bag. How do you know he is not near at this instant? Perhaps he is hovering over the enemy, waiting for the right moment to fall upon his victim? In good time he will swoop down like an eagle.

VIDALOT. Custine is far away. He has forgotten us.

BUQUET. General Moustache is enjoying himself in some little German town; he's making love to the women—and making speeches.

VERRAT. Custine's letters are the abject letters of a slave. Custine is an aristocrat like all the other aristocrats: he's betraying us—as Dumouriez be-

trayed us— [*turning to D'OYRON*] and as D'Oyron will betray us.

D'OYRON. [*Rising.*] Citizens, no one has a right to question my loyalty.

VERRAT. The aristocrats are all alike. They think of nothing except how they can best strangle the Republic. Let us have no more nobles to lead our armies! Let us have good common people, not the rotten blackguards hatched from the dung-heap of the courts! Our generals must not have a drop of corrupt blood in their veins. Put down the nobles, and we will win!

D'OYRON. [*Coldly and firmly.*] Instead of spouting meaningless generalities, look me squarely in the face. I am the only nobleman on the General Staff. Have you anything against me? If so, speak out.

VERRAT. I won't mince words. Yes, I have something against you. I demand that you be degraded in rank and made a private; that close watch be kept over you, and that if you make a suspicious move, you be sent to the guillotine—

QUESNEL. Silence, Verrat! This is no place for you to impose your will. You have no just grievance against Citizen D'Oyron. [*The officers mutter.*] We must not discourage those who have joined us. We need all the help we can get, if we wish to conquer.

TEULIER. [*Who alone has remained silent and motionless.*] No, Representative!

QUESNEL. You, too, Teulier! You are a sensible man. You told me yourself how valuable the military experience of the aristocrats would be.

TEULIER. Since I said that I have watched them at close quarters. They do us more harm than good. We should be stronger if there were not so many of us. Our worst enemies are our lukewarm friends,

who discuss and criticize, who do not blindly believe. I don't trust the aristocrats. Do as you think best with D'Oyron. I've seen him at work, and I don't want any more of his kind.

QUESNEL. Have you any complaint against him?

TEULIER. I have already spoken. Had it not been for him, Kalreuth, the Prussian prince, and the whole band of cutthroats would have been my prisoners.

D'OYRON. Teulier lacks adaptability. His plans were impossible. I always told him that.

TEULIER. Impossible! What are you saying? No Republican general ought even to take nature into account. I carried out every plan I made. Last night with my two thousand men I passed through all the enemy lines; I came to the very doors of their headquarters. If you had come as you were ordered, I could have trapped the entire Prussian staff without so much as a struggle.

D'OYRON. The difficulty was not in getting there, but in returning. You were foolish enough to walk into the jaws of the wolf, and by great good luck he didn't snap. If I had not taken it upon myself to modify your plans and divert the enemy's attention to another point, you would never have returned to Mayence.

TEULIER. That feint attack was nothing but a disguised retreat. You ought to have joined me, no matter what the cost.

D'OYRON. If I had blindly obeyed, I should have been crushed together with you.

TEULIER. Why, if you had been working for the Prussians, you couldn't have done worse.

D'OYRON. [*With a shrug.*] I saved your army.

TEULIER. You knew the plans. You ought to have followed them to the letter.

D'OYRON. [*Ironically.*] Citizen Teulier invariably

imagines himself in his seat at the Academy of Science. He thinks that facts can be twisted to suit geometrical figures. This is not the last time that facts will give the lie to his notions.

TEULIER. Every strong character subordinates nature to reason. An action worked out to the last detail by a clear and well-ordered brain is more than three-quarters an accomplished fact.

D'OYRON. [*Sarcastically.*] He thinks that men are machines, and not capricious animals who constantly deviate from the path laid out for them.

TEULIER. Your men, perhaps, because you offer them an example of caprice and insubordination. True patriots have no will of their own; their will is that of the nation.

D'OYRON. But you cannot prevent their seeing that they are headed straight for defeat.

BUQUET. Give me bayonets and bread, and I'll cross the whole world!

TEULIER. [*To D'OYRON.*] It is not their business to see anything. Their leader orders them to conquer. Let them blindly obey!

D'OYRON. How can you close their eyes?

VERRAT. Give them plenty of brandy and kick them!

TEULIER. [*Displeased, to VERRAT.*] There are other ways.

VERRAT. Why bother? Over there they give their slaves a dose of belladonna.

CHAPELAS. A mixture of sulphate and sulphur.

VERRAT. They made them crazy before sending them against us.

D'OYRON. [*With a shrug.*] Nonsense!

VERRAT. Doesn't it stand to reason? They must have lost their minds to fight us!

TEULIER. Let us keep ours. Our power rests in

the fact that we are free, thinking men; let us not impair it. If our men require stimulants, the *Marseillaise* will suffice.

D'OYRON. Ridiculous! No war was ever fought like that!

VERRAT. This madman thinks he is in the King's camp. He must needs joke about men's troubles and their lives as in the days when crowned robbers made war with mercenaries. They took precious good care not to expose their own costly hides to the bullets!

D'OYRON. Are the skins of Revolutionists any cheaper?

QUESNEL. [*Becoming more and more infuriated, but with an air of coldness, though he is tense and nervous.*] Yes, D'Oyron, human life counts for nothing here. Everyone has already sacrificed his life. Everyone offers it without reflection when the Patrie demands it.

D'OYRON. You are well aware that I have no fear for myself, and that I care no more for the life of a soldier than anyone else. But I cannot tolerate blatant absurdity, and I laugh when I see the way you have gone about things here for the past two months—contrary to all the rules of war.

TEULIER. Rules of war! Why, we are at this moment *making* the rules of war! There were none before us. We are making over the world—and war along with it!

D'OYRON. [*Crossing his arms and looking at the others in turn, he says, impertinently.*] I really admire you! You've been making war for just about a year; and you, Citizen Academician [*to TEULIER*], you, Citizen lawyer's clerk [*to BUQUET*], and you, Citizen butcher [*to VERRAT*]*—you think you can trap old war-dogs like Kalreuth and Brunswick, men who*

have grown gray in the service, men who have known Frederick!

CHAPELAS. I don't think we've made a very bad beginning!

VERRAT. How much longer is this scoundrel going to make fun of us!

BUQUET. Never fear, we'll make them dance to our tune, and if their Frederick were with them, he'd jump higher than the rest. We're all right.

TEULIER. We are going to teach them a new kind of war, and they with their fossilized routine and cut-and-dried plans will be completely off their guard. We don't keep our secret under lock and key, because we know no one except ourselves will use it.

D'OYRON. And what is the secret?

TEULIER. [*Putting his finger on a proclamation.*] It is written here on all our proclamations: Liberty, Equality, or Death.

D'OYRON. Splendid tactics!

TEULIER. [*Becoming more and more inflamed.*] Death! Do you understand, Citizen Nobleman? Death as an end and as a means. No more cold, calculating chess-games; quiet and well-regulated sports; and a capitulation to wind the whole thing up. Death as the end of the duel between us and the sacrilegious invaders of the Patrie. Death for them, or death for us; perhaps for both. And when we are no more, other armies shall have sprung from us, to kill and to die, until Liberty has swept all tyrants from the face of the earth.

CHAPELAS. You smile, D'Oyron. Do you find it amusing?

D'OYRON. [*Disdainfully.*] I do not object to being killed, but I refuse to be made ridiculous.

TEULIER. The Patrie is threatened, and he looks at himself in the mirror!

QUESNEL. [*Trying to conciliate them.*] Come, Citizens, let us not quarrel. Should we not, as good patriots, forget our likes and dislikes in the interest of the Nation?

TEULIER. Citizen Representative, that would hold true if it were not that I have observed that nothing good or great is ever accomplished except among men who respect each other and believe in the same things. This is not the case with us; let us therefore share our duties. If we would accomplish heroic acts, we have need of faithful, staunch spirits. Our fathers declared that with faith one could walk on water. They said that even of the false Roman faith. Our Republican faith is still more potent. It will endure through fire and death; it continually recreates the world. Now, if that faith is to be all-powerful, we must discard all who cannot stand her burning breath on their foreheads. D'Oyron is too much of an aristocrat; he comes from a society which is too sophisticated to understand our enthusiasm. Let him then go where his doubts cannot affect us; he must not undermine the morale of our troops! There are other tasks that you may give him.

QUESNEL. I ask nothing better than to use each man for the work he is best fitted to do. Citizen D'Oyron, since you are so contemptuous of our methods of warfare, tell us exactly what you complain of.

D'OYRON. [*With concentrated hatred.*] Send me to attack the emigrated nobles' camp.

QUESNEL. Why that? Why the emigrated nobles?

D'OYRON. What is your objection?

QUESNEL. Nothing—but I thought a former nobleman—it is not your place— After all, that is your affair.

D'OYRON. It is my pleasure. [*After a pause.*] At least, they are an enemy that would fight according to the rules.

QUESNEL. As you please.—But later! Today the party is in Verrat's hands.

CHAPELAS. And we shan't lack for music!

VERRAT. Tonight I capture Kostheim and the islands of the Main.

QUESNEL. You are still bent on that?

VERRAT. I am!

QUESNEL. Do you realize what you risk?

VERRAT. Has D'Oyron frightened you?

QUESNEL. Suit yourself. You have taken it upon yourself to accomplish this dangerous thrust. You promised me you would succeed. Well, go ahead, and don't forget that after such days as these, the Convention has its eye on the heads of its leaders, and will crown them with laurel, or—

VERRAT. [*Running his hand over the back of his neck.*] The red cravat! Never fear: it will be the laurel.

QUESNEL. We shall make feint attacks all about the city; that will make it easier for you.

VERRAT. I need no one's help. I don't want to share the pleasure of the danger with anyone.

QUESNEL. [*Dryly.*] Your personal vanity has nothing to do with the case: I am thinking of what is best for the Nation.

VERRAT. Are you blaming me for wanting to do great deeds?

QUESNEL. [*Who seems to have been suffering for some time, becomes irritable.*] You're all vain children. You can't bear having anyone else fight with you. You must obey, I tell you! Each of you must act in order that others may die for the Patrie!

CHAPELAS. You're in a devilish bad humor.

QUESNEL. Of course I am. I wish you had my gout! I've been suffering the tortures of the damned—ever since this morning. [*After a short silence, he says with finality.*] I have spoken. You, Teulier, will hold the Prussians at this side of the rampart with skirmishes and sorties—as if you still intended to carry out your plans of last night. If possible, join Verrat on the other side of the Main. And all of you: let us have no more disputes! Keep your minds on the Patrie. Let us pull together, in spite of the devil! Or mind your necks! We must keep together if we would conquer these dogs. [*He limps out. Most of the other officers disperse. During the following scene, officers come and go. Throughout, the audience must never cease to feel that the city is in a state of siege and under continual bombardment.*]

D'OYRON. [*Ironically.*] How appropriate these words of peace in the mouth of the old devil! Yes, union in hatred—the only sort of union fit for us. Were it not for the enemy about us, we should be devouring one another like a pack of wolves.

TEULIER. That seems to please you!

D'OYRON. *Homo homini lupus*—that is as old as the world. Why should I be surprised? I don't object to hatred. I served here— How jealous you are of me! But take care: if I were not here, you would turn against yourselves.

TEULIER. Blasphemy! Between my brothers-in-arms and myself there has been no feeling but of noble emulation. We love our own glory, and if we seek to surpass it, it is for the common good.

D'OYRON. Come, come, I can read. You pretend to understand one another, but I know there lacks but the occasion for your accumulated spite, petty jealousy, and hatred to break forth. If you were not

occupied, you would see how far apart you all are. But the enemy is bombarding you, and now you can think of nothing but me. You cannot forgive my belonging to another race.

TEULIER. [*Calmly.*] You are mistaken, D'Oyron. I recognize no distinctions among men; I don't blame you for your birth. It's you I don't like, and I've always told you so to your face. I don't like renegade aristocrats who haven't the soul and virtues of patriots.

D'OYRON. What proofs do you ask of my civic loyalty? Have I ever neglected to show evidence of it? Ask the Princes' army?

TEULIER. [*With a shade of disdain.*] True: you never spared your former friends.

D'OYRON. Does that shock you?

TEULIER. Possibly. *I* hate them. We all have good reason to hate them. But why do you? No one forced you to take charge of this latest expedition. But then, I am not surprised at that terrible pursuit through the Ardennes. It was a fearful sight! All the former glory of the Patrie—D'Harcourt, Vauban, Castries—caught in the woods, run down by the peasants, betrayed by their allies, mad with fear and shame, fleeing before our troops through torrents of pouring rain; clad in rags, sick with fever, dying of exhaustion and hunger, leaving behind them in the mud and filth of the trenches, their miserable wounded, like worn-out beasts. And with them, desperate women, crying out in their agony, covered with vermin. Their court dresses in rags— My hatred has disappeared in the presence of such misery. My soldiers passed them by in silence, turning their eyes the other way, allowing the poor wretches to die in peace. But you, you hate them. Every living thing that was left, that could suffer,

that might go to the guillotine—you hated. You made game of the women because of their soiled clothes. [VERRAT *laughs*.]

D'OYRON. You are too sentimental, Teulier. If you had fallen into their clutches, they wouldn't have been so soft-hearted. You have no idea what hard hearts beat beneath those soft, smooth breasts. When Erasme de Contades set fire to the huts of the Ardenne, they laughed, those little ladies who now arouse your pity.

VERRAT. He's right. I keep my pity for more deserving objects.

CHAPELAS. Baits for the people!

VERRAT. You're making fun of me, Chapelas. Don't laugh. I have some feelings of humanity, I tell you. But I—I don't care to display them too publicly.

D'OYRON. [*To TEULIER*.] You needn't seek revenge, Teulier. I am risking more than you. I shall either kill them or they will kill me. You don't know how deep their hatred lies—and my brother is the worst of them. Never a week passes that I don't receive the most terrible accusations from them, charging me with perfidy. Women try to make appointments with me in order to decoy me into their clutches. They send compromising letters—they resort to every kind of diabolic device. You don't know the power for evil that lies in the aristocrat.

TEULIER. I know how dry and cruel is the heart of the aristocrat. If I had not known it before, I should have learned today—from you, D'Oyron.

D'OYRON. [*Ironically*.] Are you going to accuse me of crime because I serve the cause of the Republic? Would you prefer to see me in Condé's army?

TEULIER. I don't like renegades.

D'OYRON. You are difficult to please. Re-read your Corneille. Does he not exhort you to sacrifice your dear ones for your country?

TEULIER. You're making game of me, but you can't deceive me: I can see through your tricks. You can't explain your cruelty by your faith in the Republic. You hate the aristocrat, but you yourself are one of them. You are not seeking to serve the Patrie, but your own ambitions. Take care, Catiline; I am keeping close watch on you.

D'OYRON. Don't imagine you can intimidate me. Remember, I know you. Who forced you to leave your books, your work, your laboratory? What but the desire to dominate others, to wear a sword? I know what the disinterestedness of men of science amounts to. They are the most ambitious men of all, continually sowing trouble and discontent; they are never happy in one place; they are envious, grasping—the most dangerous, for they always associate their own personal interests with the great aims and interests of which they believe themselves the representatives.

TEULIER. [*Calmly at first, but slowly losing control of himself.*] I ask nothing for myself, D'Oyron. If I am still alive, when my beloved Republic no longer needs me, I shall return to my quiet studies. But so long as the invader menaces my country, science must give way to action. The development of ideas is not everything; we must make sure that there is a world in which ideas can live, and we must instill them in the minds of free and truthful men. Liberty, immortal Liberty, you are born of us; science has made you bright in the past. Today let science defend you, carrying the torch at the head of your armies. Liberty, you shall put an end to the night of Europe's travail—oh, sun of Reason!

D'OYRON. You have a great deal to say about Liberty. You love her so deeply that you would confiscate her if you could.

VERRAT. I have no misgivings. Liberty is a hearty wench; she needs something more than the embraces of a lowborn rascal.

D'OYRON. [*Insolently.*] Do you think she is tempted by a butcher?

VERRAT. God Almighty! [*He puts his hand to his sabre. D'OYRON does likewise.*]

TEULIER. [*Intercepting.*] No fighting among ourselves.

D'OYRON. [*Coldly, ironically, putting back his sabre.*] How admirable a thing is war! One marches surrounded by a triple line of enemies. Soldiers smell the mouths of their own cannon close behind their backs; the leaders feel the chill of the guillotine on their necks; one's own comrades are always counting on one's death. Mistrust of one's neighbor constitutes our public safety. Here is the place we ought to send worn-out men without appetites. Life has a different savor when it is continually threatened. Who of us would die first? Who will have the other's head? [*He goes out.*]

CHAPELAS. To the devil with his insolence, his ironic and insulting airs! I've had enough of it.

TEULIER. His pride leads him into imprudence at the very moment when he ought to be doubly careful.

VERRAT. He never misses an opportunity to make me angry. We have an old account to settle, he and I. One of these days I will get even with him.

TEULIER. He is a dangerous man. No sincerity—cynically audacious—ready to do anything by force—

CHAPELAS. No doubt: he is an enemy, linked to us only by force of circumstances.

TEULIER. And what a circumstance! Some woman

whom his brother took from him. He wants revenge, and he will resort to any means to have it.

CHAPELAS. The Patrie is in danger. We must save it at all costs. He is working for us—let us leave him in peace. The moment we are through with him we can dispose of him.

TEULIER. Take care he does not strike us first. I have been suspicious of him for some time—

VERRAT. In what way?

TEULIER. I'm afraid—

VERRAT. Tell us.

TEULIER. No. I shouldn't have spoken. I have no definite charge to make—just the way it appeared to me—

VERRAT. That is enough to send him before the Convention.

TEULIER. I have no right. I have no absolute proofs against him.

VERRAT. [*With a shrug.*] Proofs? What need of proofs if one has convictions?

TEULIER. I hold convictions without proofs.

VERRAT. Good. Well, when the time comes, you have only to say the word. Or let Quesnel give me the sign during one of our sorties.

TEULIER. Why?

VERRAT. Well, I go to a very dangerous place. Perhaps a well-directed bullet would do the business.

TEULIER. [*Unwilling to understand him.*] What do you mean?

VERRAT. [*Brutally.*] Well?—Don't you see? I'm only joking!

TEULIER. [*After a pause.*] Verrat, we must always be just.

VERRAT. [*With a shrug.*] Good God! [*A pause.*]

TEULIER. [*Starting to go.*] I must go now. I

shall probably not see you until tomorrow morning. Good luck, comrades.

VERRAT. Good-bye! For victory! [TEULIER goes out.]

CHAPELAS. [*Watching TEULIER leave.*] There goes a good patriot, and a wise man. But I never feel quite easy with him. He's cold; I can't be familiar with him. He's always reserved; he never laughs; and he never tells what he is doing. Why, we don't even know who his mistress is! I don't like such a careful man. When you're with comrades, you want to be able to unbend, by God!

VERRAT. There is something of the aloof aristocrat in him. You see, Chapelas, all these fellows who study books aren't the real common people—they aren't the true friends of the people, like you and me. They think they belong to a superior race. But I'd like to know how they could get along without us! If we let Teulier have his way, we'd have to wait for the flames before crying "Fire!" The way these wise men reason! How stupid! They have no sense of practical affairs. They're all right for scribbling and thinking; but if the Nation depended on them for a thorough cleansing, she would still be on the dung-heap. Now, look at D'Oyron. He's under suspicion— Why, he is practically a criminal. He's not above treason: to all intents and purposes, he is already a traitor. What is lacking? Merely the deed. In other words, we must wait until the evil is past curing. Shall we do that? No! Well— Well, that is enough for the present.

[BUQUET, JEAN-AMABLE, and VIDALOT enter. They are followed by three soldiers, dragging and pushing a peasant, who utters strange groans. A few young officers enter and stand about, out of curiosity.]

SOLDIERS. Forward, Prussian! Forward!

VERRAT. What's this?

A SOLDIER. Is the Citizen Representative here?

VERRAT. He is in his room. He is not well. He is resting.—A spy?

SOLDIER. Yes, sir. We've just arrested him. He entered by the Frankfort Gate—selling pigeons. The soldier suspected something, and questioned this fellow. The idiot looks a little nervous. We searched him, and found this. [*He gives VERRAT a packet of letters.*]

VERRAT. [*Taking them.*] Here.—From the Prussian Headquarters!

YOUNG OFFICERS. [*Crowding round.*] Letters, Verrat? Let us see.

VERRAT. [*Who glances through the letters, pounds the table with his fist. He becomes livid and shouts with joy.*] By God! Ha! Ha!

CHAPELAS. What is it?

VERRAT. Nothing! I've got him! I've got him!

CHAPELAS. What?

VERRAT. Nothing, I tell you.—Where is Quesnel?—Ha! Ha! There is a God, after all, even for those who don't believe! [*He rushes out in search of QUESNEL, laughing uproariously, knocking over chairs and brushing aside the men in his way. He turns at the door, and stands, flushed and apoplectic, waving the letters wildly, as he cries:*] At last!

CHAPELAS. He's drunk. [*VERRAT enters QUESNEL'S room, slamming the door behind him. CHAPELAS follows. During the following scene, officers enter from time to time, so that by the end, the stage is quite filled.*]

BUQUET. [*To the Peasant.*] Well? So they captured you?

PEASANT. [*Groaning.*] Let me go!

BUQUET. [*Laughing loudly.*] Presently!

PEASANT. You'll let me go soon?

BUQUET. Don't be in a hurry. You haven't been with us two minutes. Do we bore you?

PEASANT. You won't hurt me?

BUQUET. Of course not. You won't know it when we cut your neck.

PEASANT. Oh, good sirs—

BUQUET. Well, well, well! [*The Peasant cries like a child.*]

JEAN-AMABLE. [*Disgusted.*] Good God! [*He turns his back.*]

BUQUET. [*No longer interested in the Peasant.*] Oh, Jean-Amable, were you in the sortie last night?

JEAN-AMABLE. * [*With childlike happiness.*] Oh, Fortuné, it was tremendous fun! Just think! We went all the way across the enemy's country! Once we met enemy cavalry patrols—the Red Hussars, you know. We gave them the pass-word. They thought we were peasants going to cut the grain. And Teulier's impudence! He talked five minutes with a Prussian officer! The officer never realized—Meantime our soldiers had entered the village—even the houses! If it hadn't been for that fool Bonin, we'd have captured them in bed. He fired too soon. Kaulkreuth escaped in his night-shirt. I saw him—and I missed him.

BUQUET. You oughtn't to boast about it.

JEAN-AMABLE. It's almost as much fun as if I had got him.

BUQUET. You're a sight!

JEAN-AMABLE. I received a sabre thrust—my first, Fortuné!

BUQUET. Your family would indeed be alarmed to see their little Benjamin, their spoiled darling, doing such deeds.

JEAN-AMABLE. Not bad, was it?

BUQUET. But haven't you been to bed since you came in?

JEAN-AMABLE. Am I not a *man* with the rest of them?

BUQUET. A man? A girl, whose mother used to bring her breakfast to her in bed!

JEAN-AMABLE. Fortuné, you have no right—!

BUQUET. Well, well, don't be angry. There's no need getting red in the face. I really think it's splendid to see a little bourgeois like you make so good a beginning. Your poor mother! She wouldn't let you go from her door without tying your scarf for you.

JEAN-AMABLE. [*Tearing his scarf from his neck.*] To the devil with it!

BUQUET. So you're going without your scarf merely out of bravado?

JEAN-AMABLE. If I like! [*They laugh.*]

VIDALOT. Your parents would never know you now.

BUQUET. And what would my employer, the prosecuting attorney, say if he saw me here with this sabre and these spurs? Ah, when I think that at this very moment I might be in Maître Lasseret's office at Amiens, bent over my desk, copying cases—my only diversion watching some pious old lady going to church— Ah!

VIDALOT. And I, who might be at the Hôtel de la Boule d'Or!

BUQUET. Instead, we are now leading the armies of the Patrie. We have brought our cannon to the banks of the Rhine, where the howls of the dogs of tyranny are met with our sabre thrusts.

VIDALOT. Yes, we are embarked upon a holy enterprise, and the slaves of Europe tremble before us.

JEAN-AMABLE. Our joy is intoxicating. To be

free, to defend a free nation, the only free nation in Europe—to march like kings through a ruined Europe, our souls at peace, to embrace a world that belongs to us, to break the shackles of every people, and to feel over our heads only the free and open sky, rid at last of the oppressive falsehood of a God! Who ever experienced such joy?

BUQUET. Our enemies are beginning to realize it, and they envy us. Do you know what Kalkreuth said? “The end of the world is at hand. Every Jacobin speaks as if he were a king.”

JEAN-AMABLE. True! Kings of the world! Everything is ours. We have only to take it. [QUESNEL, VERRAT, and CHAPELAS *reënter*. VERRAT *still wears the same expression as when he left; QUESNEL is violently angry. He shakes the letters in his hand.*]

BUQUET. Look at Representative Verrat. And the others— See! There is something serious the matter.

QUESNEL. Where is D'Oyron?

BUQUET. Probably with his mistress—daughter of the justice of the peace, Rue des Hommes—Armés.

QUESNEL. Two officers: Vidalot, Buquet! Go. Bring him here at once. Don't let him go, and don't allow him to communicate with anyone.

JEAN-AMABLE. What's the trouble? [VIDALOT and BUQUET *go out.*]

QUESNEL. By God! Where is the man who brought these letters?

VERRAT. Here.

OFFICERS. [*Nervously.*] What is it, Citizen?—Serious news, Verrat?—Treason?—Are we betrayed?

QUESNEL. [*To the Peasant.*] Listen to me, dog!

PEASANT. Oh, sir!

QUESNEL. Who gave you this letter?

PEASANT. Forgive me!

QUESNEL. Answer me.

PEASANT. Major von Zastrow.

VERRAT. Aide-de-camp of the Prussian king?

PEASANT. Yes.

QUESNEL. How often has he sent you with like messages?

PEASANT. This is the first time I ever brought one. He sent others with them before. I won't do it again!

CHAPELAS. We know you won't, by God!

VERRAT. No, you won't do it again!

PEASANT. You aren't going to kill me?

VERRAT. Just a little, my good fellow. [*The Peasant whines and groans.*]

QUESNEL. Come, stop your braying. You knew the risk you were running. Answer me! How did you know D'Oyron?

OFFICERS. D'Oyron?—Where is D'Oyron?

QUESNEL. Will you answer me? I'll have you beaten till you answer.

PEASANT. Oh, good sirs, you won't kill me?

QUESNEL. You don't deserve it. You're not worth the lead we are going to put into you tomorrow.

VERRAT. How long has the traitor been corresponding with the Prussians? [*The Peasant, groaning like an old woman, half faints. The officers kick him.*]

VERRAT. You can't get anything out of the beast. He's half dead with fear. Carry him out: he's only in the way. [*The Peasant is dragged out like an old sack.*]

OFFICERS. [*In an uproar.*] Was D'Oyron in communication with the enemy?

QUESNEL. Yes; this fellow was bringing him a letter from Prussian Headquarters. He's been betraying us for weeks. [*There is a veritable uproar—*

cries, curses, and the like. *The men are beside themselves with fury.*]

BUQUET. [*Opening the door and entering.*] He wasn't far off. We found him taking a walk. [QUESNEL restores order in the room.]

D'OYRON. [*Surprised.*] What's happening? Here I am, Representative. [*He is interrupted by a storm of abuse. He does not at first comprehend. Then he turns pale.*] What! What do you say? By God! [*To QUESNEL.*] Citizen, tell them to be still. For God's sake, keep still. I demand an explanation. [*To the officers.*] One of you step forth and dare to repeat that!

JEAN-AMABLE. Traitor! Spy! Prussian!

D'OYRON. [*Seizing him by the throat.*] Take that back! Take that back! [*The other officers fall upon him and rescue JEAN-AMABLE. VERRAT and QUESNEL stand between them. The Proprietor of the inn, together with his servants, crowd the doorway, and chatter excitedly.*]

QUESNEL. Silence! Silence! Listen to me, traitor. And you, Citizens, keep quiet. I have here the letter brought by a spy from the King of Prussia to Commandant D'Oyron.

D'OYRON. [*With fury.*] That's a lie!

QUESNEL. [*Reading.*] "Monsieur le chevalier: It is with the greatest pleasure that I express my satisfaction at the sincerity of your promises and the promptness of your deeds. Had it not been for you, our Headquarters and Staff would in all likelihood have fallen into the hands of the enemy last night. It seems to me, however, that you ought to have warned us of the danger a little sooner. Nevertheless, thanks to your feint attack on Bretzenheim, and your skilful retreat, I gladly admit that you helped us out of a difficult situation, and enabled us

to avoid an encounter which might have caused the gravest results. I wish to assure you that my master, the King, will never forget your services, and will reward you according to your deserts after victory is assured. Continue to send us information and help. Do not lose hope! Before long, the carcasses of these king-killers will hang from the walls of our poor Mayence. You may send an answer by the courier who brings this. He is to be trusted implicitly.—VON ZASTROW.”

D'OYRON. [*Who has been raging inarticulately, cries out.*] It's false! It's false! False! Absurd! They are trying to ruin me! [*The officers shout.*]

VERRAT. [*To QUESNEL.*] That is what Teulier said. Do you remember this morning? He complained that he was being betrayed.

QUESNEL. You are right, Verrat. He did. I didn't notice at the time: I thought it was merely temper.

CHAPELAS. And this has been going on for weeks! [*The crowd is heard shouting outside.*]

QUESNEL. What's that?

AN OFFICER. The city has wind of it already.

THE PROPRIETOR. [*Rushing wildly to QUESNEL.*] Citizen Representative, they're breaking everything. They're trying to get in! They want the traitor's head!

QUESNEL. Guard the doors! Call the Grenadiers. Disperse the crowd. Justice must take its course.

CROWD. [*Outside.*] Hang him! [*Soldiers are seen passing and sounds of a scuffle are heard.*]

VERRAT. They will never allow him to reach the jail.

QUESNEL. Lock him in that room. And put two guards over him. They are not to leave him for an instant. Bind him. He mustn't be allowed to kill

himself. [*They carry off D'OYRON, who foams with rage. All at once the uproar subsides. They all seem exhausted. Dead silence follows. D'OYRON's struggles are heard from the next room.*]

QUESNEL. The council is called. Call the other members at once. The rest of you, leave us. Teulier! Go and get him.

VERRAT. He is not here. You gave him an order. He is now outside the ramparts. He will not return until night.

QUESNEL. No matter. We cannot wait for him. The city knows everything now. Never mind: we have enough proof without him. [*Gravely.*] Citizens, one word before we begin: think only of the Patrie; forget everything else. Friendship and enmity must be forgotten when Justice speaks.—And now let us open the case.

ACT II

[*The scene is the same. It is night. The Proprietor is present. TEULIER enters.*]

PROPRIETOR. Ah, Citizen, you've returned! We didn't expect you so soon.

TEULIER. Delayed! I intended to take Mombach, but the enemy knew our plans, God only knows how. We'll try again tomorrow.

PROPRIETOR. The enemy knew! It's that damned traitor again!

TEULIER. Who are you speaking about?

PROPRIETOR. What! Don't you know? Don't you know anything about it?

TEULIER. Nothing. I've seen no one. What has happened since I went away?

PROPRIETOR. What has happened? Ah, Citizen

Teulier, great things! Good God, who would have thought it?

TEULIER. Tell me.

PROPRIETOR. You would never guess.

TEULIER. I have no time to waste. Speak.

PROPRIETOR. Well, that good-for-nothing aristocrat, that D'Oyron—

TEULIER. Yes?

PROPRIETOR. He's been betraying us!

TEULIER. What's that?

PROPRIETOR. I say he's betrayed us, Citizen. Sold us to the enemy.

TEULIER. Did he escape?

PROPRIETOR. No. They arrested him—caught him red-handed—couldn't deny it. They'll guillotine him tomorrow.

TEULIER. The dog! This is fine news! But I'm glad to hear it. I suspected it. I never trusted that cur. You know I never troubled to hide what I thought of him.

PROPRIETOR. I'll give you credit for that, Citizen. You have the instincts of a virtuous man. You can smell crime a league away.

TEULIER. There's little credit in that. That hypocritical face of his—that glib tongue—the lying impudence of the fellow. You have only to shake his fish-like hand to be suspicious of him. We're in great luck, Rieffel, to have caught the scoundrel. He might have done us great harm.

PROPRIETOR. Yes, indeed.

TEULIER. We'll settle his account. Well, I'll sleep sound tonight, because I know he is safe with us. Now the army is rid of him, thank God! Tell me how it happened— No, wait; I'm famished. Give me something to eat: I haven't had a bite since this morning.

PROPRIETOR. I'll warm up some roast goose for you. But you'll have to wait: the fire is low. Or, if you're in a hurry, I have some cold pork?

TEULIER. Whatever is ready—it makes no difference. I'm sleepy. [*The Proprietor goes out.*] So I was right after all! He came with us in order to betray us. Queer! For a man with nobility, courage, and intelligence, to use his gifts in an ignoble cause! He must be rotten to the core; he was not forced to do it. A traitor because he had nothing else to do! He was clever, the dog—and sly! You can't deny it; he fought well in the good cause for six months. What dissimulation!

PROPRIETOR. [*Returning with the food.*] Yes. Citizen; it's unbelievable! You wonder how he could keep it to himself for so long. It's been going on for months—think of it!

TEULIER. Really?

PROPRIETOR. They have proofs—correspondence with the King of Prussia. Letters from him dating from the very first of the siege.

TEULIER. Who captured them?

PROPRIETOR. Verrat.

TEULIER. [*Astonished.*] Verrat? Is that true? When did he discover them?

PROPRIETOR. Not twenty minutes after you left. They arrested a spy with letters—

TEULIER. And cross-questioned the spy?

PROPRIETOR. He refused—said he didn't know what they meant. Well, he understood after—!

TEULIER. Good! Leave me.

PROPRIETOR. Do you wish anything else?

TEULIER. No.

PROPRIETOR. You aren't eating a thing. Isn't the meat good? [*He points to the plate.*]

TEULIER. Yes, yes. In a few minutes. I'm tired.

[*The Proprietor goes out. TEULIER says nothing for a few moments. He sits on the edge of his chair, gazing at nothing. He then rises and walks back and forth mechanically, muttering incomprehensible sounds. He stops and puts his hand to his forehead.*] My head! I can't seem to think. I'm too tired. [*He sits down.*] Curious! I'm not hungry any longer. But I must eat. [*He puts the plate in front of him, but does not eat.*] Fortunately, we have caught him. The scoundrel! So that is why he wanted to conduct an expedition against the nobles! He suspected we were on his trail. He got our plan of defence and wanted to make away with it. And then, it would have been easy— [*He drops the thread of his thought.*] Verrat, so it was Verrat who—? [*Mechanically.*] It would have been so easy— “A well-aimed bullet would do the business”— [*Irritated.*] What's the matter with me? I don't seem able to finish a sentence! [*He pushes his plate away, and rises.*] Correspondence with the King of Prussia? For months! Just after I left—as Rieffel said. He defended Brunswick this morning—he admired the Prussian tactics. But that brother of his, who has sworn his destruction—the plots of the exiled nobles. God Almighty! [*He breathes deep, and sits down again.*] Calm yourself, Teulier. You're getting excited. Let us reason it out. What D'Oyron told me may have been only another ruse. The whole question is, whether he made up that story in order to divert suspicion. If, as Rieffel says, there are compromising letters written by him—a whole correspondence— [*He rises quickly and goes to the door, calling:*] Rieffel! Rieffel! [*The Proprietor runs in.*]

PROPRIETOR. Well, well, what is it? Do you want to wake up the whole place? What is it, Citizen?

TEULIER. [*Pushing away the plate.*] Take that away. I don't like it. It's too greasy.

PROPRIETOR. The idea! Citizen Chapelas said that never in his life—

TEULIER. Never mind! Wait! Were you present when they arrested him?

PROPRIETOR. The traitor! I stood in that doorway. It was frightful. They behaved like mad dogs. And—

TEULIER. Do you know whether the letters were written by—?

PROPRIETOR. By the traitor? I don't know. The Council has them. I don't know whether they were written by him or to him—it's the same thing. At any rate, there were letters.

TEULIER. You may go. [*The Proprietor goes out.*] Absurd! They couldn't have found on this spy letters written to the Prussians. And if they are condemning him on the evidence of letters written to him by the enemy— God, what have they done! [*He goes to the window and opens it. The Proprietor reënters to clear the table.*]

PROPRIETOR. Citizen, you are letting the snow in. You're going to freeze us out.

TEULIER. [*Ferociously.*] I said to leave me. [*The Proprietor raises his arms, and goes out. TEULIER sits down again.*] It was well I came back tonight. If it hadn't been for that damned accident, I should have been at Mombach. I'd have passed the night at camp, and tomorrow— He's a scoundrel, after all. It's best to be rid of him. [*To himself.*] Coward! But what can I do? I have no choice. I ought to ask, and find out,—examine my conscience. Yes. I must see Quesnel. [*He does not stir.*] At once! Well? My leg won't move! I—I am afraid. If I only see— Ah, I know Verrat: what would he

not dare? [*He rises, and quickly gulps down some water which he pours from the carafe.*] March! If I hesitate, it proves that I am sure! I will go. [*He walks toward the door of QUESNEL'S room. QUESNEL, partly undressed, appears in the doorway.*]

QUESNEL. What the devil is all this noise? Oh, it's you, Teulier? Devil take you, what do you mean by mumbling this way for the last half hour? Whom are you angry with?

TEULIER. Were you asleep, Quesnel?

QUESNEL. Sleep? What is sleep? Ever since morning I've been tortured by insomnia.

TEULIER. What are you talking about?

QUESNEL. It's my damned gout. I can't close my eyes. [*In agony.*] That isn't all, Teulier. I feel it coming on me.

TEULIER. What?

QUESNEL. The fit. It's been coming for days. Oh, God, this poor body of mine!

TEULIER. Won't you take something for it?

QUESNEL. There's only one thing that is good for me: rest, and the waters. Without them, my doctor says I may die any day. What can I do? Well, I don't matter, but the Patrie does. The poor Patrie is ill; shall I think of myself? We must all think of Her, Teulier.

TEULIER. Don't lose courage.

QUESNEL. I'm not losing courage. I know that Custine has forgotten us. I was unwilling to admit it this morning. And General Moustache will take good care not to use his power to get us out of this. He will let us rot here. We'll all die, one after the other. Well, so much the better—I wish it were tomorrow.

TEULIER. You are suffering, Citizen.

QUESNEL. Yes! Oh, my God! Well, let's not think of it. Change the subject.

TEULIER. Yes. I wanted to speak to you of something else.

QUESNEL. Something else? Aren't you tired? Of course, *you* can sleep.

TEULIER. No, I can't sleep any more than you—tonight.

QUESNEL. Do you suffer, too? Why, you're face is covered with sweat. And it's hellish cold here. Close the window! Are you sick?

TEULIER. Yes—morally sick.

QUESNEL. That's nothing. Bodily ills are the only real ones.

TEULIER. You suffer too much. You don't know what you're saying.

QUESNEL. Soul sickness! You can't suffer very much from something that doesn't exist.

TEULIER. You must respect reason. Every day you expose your body to bullets in order to protect sacred Liberty against tyrants.

QUESNEL. Never mind what I say. Another attack. Speak, comrade: what troubles you?

TEULIER. I find it hard to tell. Well, it is this: you have condemned D'Oyron to death.

QUESNEL. For want of a worse punishment. He deserved far more. Well, I suppose it will do in this case.

TEULIER. You were in a great hurry.

QUESNEL. It was necessary. The whole city knew about it. We had to satisfy the populace with immediate action.

TEULIER. What did he say at the trial?

QUESNEL. You would never have recognized him as the same man, he was so changed. At first, he was the arrogant aristocrat of old, then all at once

he became hoarse, and later his head shook with rage.

TEULIER. Did he confess?

QUESNEL. No. He violently denied the charges. Then when he saw it was hopeless he quivered with rage. He realized it was the end.

TEULIER. And the spy? Did they bring them together?

QUESNEL. Of course. At first he pretended not to recognize him. He couldn't have behaved otherwise.

TEULIER. [*Walking rapidly back and forth.*] I wish I had been there.

QUESNEL. It wasn't a holiday for any of us. It was very painful.

TEULIER. Did you think I meant because I wished to see my enemy humiliated?

QUESNEL. I thought so.

TEULIER. Thanks. [*Irritated.*] It does give me pleasure to crush the pride of those I hate, but I don't have to go to law for that!

QUESNEL. You're wrought up this evening.

TEULIER. [*Going to him, and taking his hands.*] Quesnel, tell me: you are all sure, absolutely sure?

QUESNEL. [*Not understanding.*] Of what?

TEULIER. Of his guilt?

QUESNEL. Do you doubt it? Don't you know the evidence? It's incontrovertible.

TEULIER. Several letters, or only one?

QUESNEL. Only one, but it's worth a dozen, because it mentions former letters.

TEULIER. A single letter! You ought to look twice at it before condemning a man. A single sheet of paper!

QUESNEL. [*Irritated.*] Look here, Teulier; I can read, I tell you!

TEULIER. Don't be offended, Citizen.

QUESNEL. You're damned insulting. Do you think we judge lightly in such a case? Why are you so suspicious?

TEULIER. How are we sure this is not a scheme of our enemies? For the purpose of weakening our morale? Perhaps they want to sow seeds of dissension among us? If we are so ready to accept such evidence, we shall be in constant fear in the future.

QUESNEL. Such men as D'Oyron are not safe. I know them. They will resort to anything. But there is no reason to suppose that this is a ruse. D'Oyron is no more to be feared by them than you are, or Verrat. Why should they single him out, rather than you?

TEULIER. He was easier. And they hate him more than they do us.

QUESNEL. He is one of them.

TEULIER. For weeks they have been trying to ruin him.

QUESNEL. How do you know that?

TEULIER. He said so this morning.

QUESNEL. Who? D'Oyron? What did he say?

TEULIER. He raged bitterly against their schemes, and spoke of anonymous letters.

QUESNEL. Did he tell you that?

TEULIER. Verrat was there, and Chapelas too.

QUESNEL. They told me nothing of that.

TEULIER. I have no doubt.

QUESNEL. Why? Teulier, you suspect someone. Take care, Teulier; I shan't ask you anything, but take care: you are about to commit a crime.

TEULIER. Rather to prevent one.

QUESNEL. Wait. Don't say anything. Go out for a walk. Take the air. You are excited—you imagine things. We were wrong to start this talk so late. We are both tired—two nights without sleep. Go to

bed. We'll discuss it later. Once you start, I can't stop you. I must hear everything you have to say, and judge for myself.

TEULIER. [*Rising.*] Very well. You have reminded me of what I risk, and that gives me the courage and strength to dare.

QUESNEL. Teulier—

TEULIER. Silence, Citizen Representative. It is your duty to hear me. Judge me, or I will judge you.

QUESNEL. Speak.

TEULIER. First, the letter. [*QUESNEL starts to rise.*] Don't move. I'll get it.

QUESNEL. On the table, under the glass globe. [*TEULIER goes out.*] So—? Impossible! No, no, no. That must not be. [*TEULIER returns with the letter.*] Look at it, Teulier; the letter proves what you said in the Council: the failure of your expedition because of D'Oyron; his feint attack on Bretzenheim, the retreat of his troops—

TEULIER. Lies, lies in order to ruin him!

QUESNEL. But you accused him this morning. You even went so far as to say that if he were working for the Prussians he couldn't have acted differently.

TEULIER. You know how easily I lose my temper. When I am excited I think of nothing but overcoming my adversary. I was angry with D'Oyron. You know, he lacks the sacred enthusiasm to inspire our battalions. He disobeyed my orders; he made me see red with his insolent aristocratic airs. But I must say that nothing he did yesterday renders him suspicious: he took Bretzenheim and captured prisoners. True, he did not coöperate with me; but my plan was not a good one, and perhaps his action saved the army. From the viewpoint of strict discipline he is guilty, but who would seriously accuse him of treachery? My surprise attack failed: that was

my own fault. There is only one enemy, and that enemy is well aware of the dissensions among us, and watches every opportunity to break our unity. They seize upon such a pretext as this, allowing us to vent our hatred among our own number.

QUESNEL. [*After gravely turning the matter over in his mind, and scratching his head, he rises.*] The spy! [TEULIER goes to the door and opens it.]

TEULIER. Decaen!

SOLDIER. [*Outside.*] Yes, Commandant?

TEULIER. Bring us the Prussian. [*The soldier goes out.* QUESNEL walks back and forth in agitation.] You ought not to walk, Quesnel. It's not good for you.

QUESNEL. [*Angrily.*] Go to the devil! [*Silence. They are each absorbed in thought, and do not look at each other. Two soldiers bring in the Peasant.*]

TEULIER. [*To the soldiers.*] Stand outside and guard the door.

PEASANT. [*Advancing toward the men, with an expression of timorous joy on his face.*] Thank you, thank you—

QUESNEL. [*Surprised.*] What's the matter with you, dog? [*The Peasant merely moves his lips, looks at the officers, and retires a step or two.*] You are Jakob Gabel of the village of Weisenau?

PEASANT. Yes, General.

QUESNEL. Call me Citizen.—Were you sent from the Prussian Headquarters with secret letters?

PEASANT. Yes, Citizen. I've confessed everything, I've confessed!

QUESNEL. They gave you the letter for Citizen Commandant D'Oyron?

PEASANT. I swear I've told everything. I don't know any more than what I told the Commandant.

QUESNEL. What?

TEULIER. What Commandant?

PEASANT. [*On his guard.*] Did—?

QUESNEL. Well?

PEASANT. Didn't he?

QUESNEL. Well, what is it? [*The Peasant looks suspiciously at the officers, and then assumes an expression of firmness.*]

PEASANT. Nothing. I haven't anything more to say. [*TEULIER looks closely at the Peasant, who lowers his eyes.*]

QUESNEL. Was it Major von Zastrow himself who gave you the letter for D'Oyron?

PEASANT. Yes, Citizen.

TEULIER. Did D'Oyron write to him?

PEASANT. Yes, Citizen.

TEULIER. Are you positive?

PEASANT. Positive.

TEULIER. How do you know? [*The Peasant does not answer.*]

QUESNEL. Did you ever take back any of his letters?

PEASANT. Yes, Citizen—that is, no: not me. It was Güllich, Gottfried Güllich of Obermoschel.

QUESNEL. Did he take many letters?

PEASANT. Heaps.

TEULIER. Will you swear to that?

PEASANT. Oh, Citizen, by the Good God! [*He makes the sign of the cross.*]

TEULIER. He lies.

QUESNEL. Get out!

PEASANT. [*Trembling with emotion.*] Then I'm free?

QUESNEL. Don't I tell you to go? Of course!

PEASANT. Can I really go back? Oh, Citizens—!

QUESNEL. What does he mean? Go back? Where?

PEASANT. Home—to Weisenau—you promised—

QUESNEL. You're crazy. Go back to jail. When you leave, it will be on your way to the guillotine.

PEASANT. [*Terror-stricken.*] That—that can't be!

QUESNEL. [*With a shrug.*] You will see.

PEASANT. Citizen! But you pardoned me!

QUESNEL. I?

PEASANT. You promised!

QUESNEL. I promised you?

PEASANT. Not you: the Commandant.

TEULIER. What Commandant?

PEASANT. Commandant Verrat.

TEULIER. Commandant Verrat promised you? Has he talked with you? When did he see you? What did he say to you?

PEASANT. [*Losing his presence of mind.*] Didn't he tell you? Didn't you pardon me? The rascal! The traitor! Have pity on me, Citizens. Save me. I'll tell everything!

QUESNEL. Speak, then.

PEASANT. Will you save me if I tell the truth?

QUESNEL. No. The Convention does not drag forth the truth at the expense of a lie. You will be executed.

PEASANT. [*Hatefully.*] Then I don't care how much you kill each other here!

TEULIER. D'Oyron is not guilty?

PEASANT. Yes, he is guilty—you, too, all of you!

QUESNEL. We can't get anything out of him. [*The Peasant creeps toward the door, cowering. All of a sudden, he turns and addresses the officers in mad fury.*]

PEASANT. No! He must pay the price first!

QUESNEL. Who?

PEASANT. I'll tell you everything if you'll be still. I wish you all in hell, him especially! Listen to me. I told him I wanted to tell him something.

QUESNEL. When was this?

PEASANT. This afternoon. The Commandant came. We were alone. Then I told him everything.

TEULIER. What?

PEASANT. Everything. The whole truth. That the letter is a plot to ruin Commandant D'Oyron. It was his brother, the Count D'Oyron, who gave it to me—out of revenge. He said he'd be glad to be the cause of his brother's death at the hands of the Revolutionists. That I was to let myself be caught with the letter on me. That's the whole truth. [TEULIER and QUESNEL look at each other in astonishment.]

QUESNEL. [*Hoarsely.*] That's a lie.

PEASANT. I gave him proofs.

QUESNEL. What proofs?

PEASANT. A few days ago the Prussians wrote to a Doctor Melchior Haupt, a professor who lives here, telling him of their plan, and ordered him to be ready. I was to give him Major von Zastrow's letter to D'Oyron, and Melchior was to bring it to you.

QUESNEL. And what then?

PEASANT. That's all.

TEULIER. But Verrat?

PEASANT. He said nothing. He just listened, and then he got angry. He cursed and kicked the wall. Then he said I lied, and that if I kept on lying I'd have my head chopped off. I told him I wasn't lying, but he put his fist in my face and cursed terribly. Then I asked him if I would be pardoned because I had told the truth, and he said yes. He left, and I've been waiting all day to be freed. When you sent for me I thought I was going to be set free. The dog! He lied to me! [QUESNEL and TEULIER are silent. They look at each other. The Peasant cries hysterically.]

QUESNEL. Get out. [*The Peasant goes toward the door, opens it, and returns to the officers.*]

PEASANT. Bloodthirsty dogs! Dirty Frenchmen! King-killers! [*The soldiers drag him out. TEULIER and QUESNEL, both deeply stirred, sit in silence, not daring to look at each other. Finally TEULIER rises and touches QUESNEL on the shoulder.*]

TEULIER. Come!

QUESNEL. How the devil are we to get out of this situation? What are we to do, Teulier; what are we to do?

TEULIER. Free him. There is still time.

QUESNEL. Time? But have you considered?

TEULIER. It is now two. The execution is to be at six. We have four hours. Do we need more?

QUESNEL. If we had four days, I wouldn't be any surer of what I ought to do.

TEULIER. A mere scratch of the pen is sufficient.

QUESNEL. Do you ask me to pardon D'Oyron? What will Mayence say?

TEULIER. What difference is that to you?

QUESNEL. They will say we are lax with traitors, that I am a traitor myself, that I am even anticipating defeat.

TEULIER. Are you working for the sake of public opinion?

QUESNEL. I need not stir it up against me. I ought not to weaken my present position.

TEULIER. Tell them he is innocent.

QUESNEL. They won't believe me.

TEULIER. Tell it to the General Staff.

QUESNEL. Nor will they. And all who believe me would be suspected tomorrow.

TEULIER. Citizen, I think I am dreaming. Do you believe that D'Oyron is innocent?

QUESNEL. I fear so—now.

TEULIER. Then it is your duty to save him. Is it not?

QUESNEL. I don't know.

TEULIER. Are you not going to save him?

QUESNEL. Perhaps it is impossible.

TEULIER. Impossible to save an innocent man, condemned by you?

QUESNEL. Innocent? He must be proved innocent to the other.

TEULIER. Prove it. You have the means.

QUESNEL. What means? After all, I don't *know* that he is innocent.

TEULIER. You don't know?

QUESNEL. The testimony of a spy. He began by lying to us. What reason have we for supposing that he is not lying now?

TEULIER. Didn't you notice his eyes? His actions? His obvious sincerity?

QUESNEL. I don't know.

TEULIER. He told you of his proofs. That plan to ruin D'Oyron. The letters to Melchior Haupt. Investigate. Search his house.

QUESNEL. Or else the spy lied, and we shall find nothing. If he spoke the truth, the letters will have been burned—unless— Do you think someone was ahead of us, perhaps?

TEULIER. Yes. Verrat! Call him. Ask him for the documents.

QUESNEL. He will deny everything.

TEULIER. Confront him with the spy.

QUESNEL. Then, to save D'Oyron, we must condemn Verrat.

TEULIER. Yes.

QUESNEL. And would you dare publicly hurl the awful condemnation in the face of that terrible man?

TEULIER. Saint-Just would raise the scaffold this

very night on the ramparts, in the presence of both armies, and show them the sight.

QUESNEL. And so would I, in times of peace, but here I cannot destroy my own men. If D'Oyron is pardoned he will be an object of suspicion. If Verrat were condemned, doubt would reign everywhere. And I cannot do without Verrat. I need him. Listen! Do you hear the cannon? That is he: he is attacking at this moment. If Verrat is condemned, I lose half the army. Who better than he understands how to lead men? They have taken Kostheim this evening. This bitter cold night they crossed the Main. They love their burly devil—a man who leads them into the fray, hurling curses at them. He is master of his legion. If he were arrested there would be a revolution; they would never forgive me.

TEULIER. Gain time, somehow. Delay the execution. Pretend it is necessary to prolong the trial. Inform the Convention.

QUESNEL. Impossible! The people and the army are out of their minds with excitement over the news. Public opinion is very strong—the people would accuse the General Staff. And we cannot count on the Convention. The Jacobins sent Verrat to us. He is Fouquier's friend and Hébert's; the *Journal de la Montagne* and all the clubs are on his side.

TEULIER. Let me hear no more of such unworthy reasoning! In a matter of justice, we must forget parties. You are risking your head every minute now for the Patrie. Can't you risk it once for the sake of justice?

QUESNEL. I love the Patrie more than justice.

TEULIER. Do you recognize any distinction between them? Why do you think we are fighting here? For the ambition of a few Jacobins? It is for the sake of justice that the whole nation has taken up

arms. The day the Nation violates justice she will be no more than a nest of tyrants, the same that we now seek to exterminate. She will disappear from the face of the earth. France an oppressor and hangman? I would rather strangle her with my hands, break her into a thousand pieces—like this! [*He throws the plate before him on the stone floor, smashing it to pieces. A soldier enters precipitately.*]

SOLDIER. Citizens!

QUESNEL. A courier!

SOLDIER. It's done! We've got them!

QUESNEL. Are the islands captured?

SOLDIER. We're victors! The Revolutionists have won. We beat them and sent them to supper in the Main. Oh, Citizens, it was magnificent! If you please—my tongue is dry— [*He drinks from a flagon.*] The Island of Kopf is ours. God, what a battle! You never saw such fighting! Commandant Verrat—he's a lion—you can't see anything but his eyes—he's covered with powder from head to foot. Listen to his plan: in order to put the enemy off the scent while we were crossing on rafts, he went himself with thirty men and two pieces of cannon and crossed the canal in a boat, in order to attract the Prussians' fire. He was there an hour. His huge arms attracted them. Meantime, we crossed. He wouldn't leave till the boat sank under him. And then the fighting after that! Man to man—like animals! Verrat himself cut the throat of the Prussian Commandant. After it was over, though we were dead tired and starving, we carried him on our shoulders, like a Roman emperor, all over the captured island. He told me to come and tell you. I didn't like to leave, but when the old devil speaks, you've got to obey. What excitement over there! They're proclaiming him General!

QUESNEL. Very well. Get something to eat in the kitchen, and then come back. [*The soldier goes out.*] You see, Teulier, I can't strike the monster.

TEULIER. If he won forty victories, he must answer for his crime.

QUESNEL. Later. Leave the matter to me—after the siege, if we are still alive.

TEULIER. Innocent blood will have been shed by us.—Never!

QUESNEL. Teulier, do you recall that it was you yourself who told me that D'Oyron would betray us some day?

TEULIER. I said that we must keep a strict watch, and I repeat it. But today he is innocent.

QUESNEL. You know nothing about it, Teulier. Think: we shall be executing him not for today's affair, but for what he might do.

TEULIER. Sophistry! It is unworthy of our nation. Let us allow all sorts of ferocity, but never a lie!

QUESNEL. I cannot strike Verrat. There would be an insurrection.

TEULIER. Lend me your authority and power, and I will arrest him at the head of his own army.

QUESNEL. No, no, Teulier; nothing can be done.

TEULIER. You refuse to act? Are you willing to let your conscience rest? To be a partner in the crime?

QUESNEL. Verrat is not guilty.

TEULIER. You would not dare swear that.

QUESNEL. If crime there be, let it rest on my shoulders.

TEULIER. You have solid shoulders, true; but I—I cannot let it rest on mine. What about my conscience? Even if I could keep silence, I should be tortured day and night.

QUESNEL. What the devil do I care for your conscience? This is a matter which vitally concerns the safety of the Patrie, and you think about yourself, and your sleepless nights! You will suffer, you say? Well, don't I suffer? Suffer in silence, I tell you, but save the Patrie! Have we not sacrificed everything to Her? Our goods, our lives, our affections—haven't we thrown them away for Her? If the Patrie demands your conscience, by God, throw it away—and yourself with it!

TEULIER. [*Stubbornly.*] Send for Verrat.

QUESNEL. [*Irritated.*] I have said no. You must obey.

TEULIER. I owe obedience only to the Council, and not to you. Call them together.

QUESNEL. What are you going to do?

TEULIER. Waken the officers, send for those on the ramparts; recall Verrat, and convoke the Council.

QUESNEL. It means ruin for you, for all of us. Think well—

TEULIER. I have decided. If you dare not speak, I will.

QUESNEL. Take care; you too will commit a crime. You wish to do your duty. Remember, your first duty is to be victorious, and to help us all to win. If Verrat declares you are a traitor, Verrat will be speaking the truth.

TEULIER. Accuse me if you dare!

QUESNEL. Teulier, for our friendship's sake!

TEULIER. I have no further use for your friendship!

QUESNEL. [*Menacingly.*] Don't aggravate me. I will fight, Teulier, because you are going to do wrong.

TEULIER. Call Verrat.

QUESNEL. You will call down hatred, suspicion on yourself, and bring on civil war!

TEULIER. [*With concentrated violence.*] Let justice be done, though the heavens fall!

ACT III

The scene is the same. It is early morning. The Officers' Council is sitting as at the beginning of the first act, except for VERRAT and D'OYRON, who stand. QUESNEL, VIDALOT, and CHAPELAS alone are seated. The others stand near the fireplace, their mantles thrown around their shoulders, or else walk back and forth from the window. They are interested in the battle, which is still in progress.

QUESNEL. Citizens, it is with great regret, and only upon the insistence of one of our number, that I have called you together so early in the morning. It is a matter of grave importance.

OFFICERS. What news, Quesnel?—A courier from Custine?—Message from the Convention?—Verrat has captured the islands!—I know, I know: magnificent.—

QUESNEL. The matter concerns the man who was condemned.

CHAPELAS. What? Was it for him that I was called from Kastel?

VIDALOT. We are tired enough as it is, without being called from our sleep like this.

BUQUET. Is this all? I was needed over there.

QUESNEL. It is now half-past five. He is to be executed in half an hour. There was need of great haste.

CHAPELAS. Why? He has been tried and condemned. Must we be present at the ceremony?

VIDALOT. [*Who has not been listening.*] What's that about Verrat?

BUQUET. Magnificent! He has saved Mayence!

VIDALOT. He's given the Prussians something to think about now. One or two more such blows, and we'll see them slinking back where they belong.

BUQUET. Poor little Jean-Amable!

VIDALOT. Poor fellow! Had his head shot off in the first of it.

QUESNEL. [*Motioning for silence.*] Certain facts have come to light since yesterday—important facts.

CHAPELAS. Has he confessed?

QUESNEL. A member of the Council maintains that he is innocent.

OFFICERS. Nonsense!—Innocent!—Who says so?

QUESNEL. I leave that responsibility to the man himself.

TEULIER. [*Rising.*] Citizens—

CHAPELAS. Teulier!—Of course! Looking for notoriety!

TEULIER. Citizens, you know very well whether or not I am D'Oyron's enemy. Yesterday morning I accused him. But the rules of honor are as strict toward an enemy as a friend. What else could I do if chance brought me proof of his innocence? I was forced to stifle my personal hatred, and bring you the means of repairing an injustice. [*Ironic exclamations are heard after the words "innocence" and "injustice." The officers shrug their shoulders, and listen incredulously. Some of them turn their backs upon TEULIER and talk to one another.*]

VIDALOT. He must always take the opposite side!

TWO OFFICERS. [*Who are listening to the cannon outside.*] Verrat is beginning once again. Listen. Those are his.—No—now the wind's turned.

CHAPELAS. [*To QUESNEL, with a bored air.*] Haven't you told Citizen Teulier the facts in the case?

QUESNEL. I told him everything.

CHAPELAS. Has he read the letter?

QUESNEL. Yes.

CHAPELAS. Has he *seen* it?

TEULIER. Yes, I have seen it.

CHAPELAS. Is that not sufficient?

TEULIER. The letter was forged by his enemies for the purpose of turning us against him.

OFFICERS. I thought he was going to say that!—That's what the traitor himself says!—Easy enough to say!

TEULIER. I can prove it.

CHAPELAS. Did the Prussians tell you?

TEULIER. I have questioned the spy.

VIDALOT. He testified before us all.

TEULIER. He confessed the truth to me.

CHAPELAS. How do you know that?

TEULIER. The proofs of D'Oyron's innocence are in the hands of one of our officers.

CHAPELAS. [*Threateningly.*] You might find it difficult to say which officer?

TEULIER. I am going to tell you his name.

CHAPELAS. Who?

TEULIER. Verrat. [*General excitement and indignation.*]

CHAPELAS. It's a vile lie! Citizen Representative, we are being insulted. Will you allow that?

QUESNEL. It is your duty to hear the accusation. You may decide later.

BUQUET. He has no right to outrage one of our men!

TEULIER. D'Oyron is also one of our men.

BUQUET and CHAPELAS. A traitor! An aristocrat!

TEULIER. We are all equal at the bar of justice.

BUQUET. You dare compare the hero of Kostheim to the miserable cur who betrayed us?

CHAPELAS. It is infamous to accuse a man who is absent.

QUESNEL. I have sent for Verrat. He will be here presently. Never fear, we shall confront him with his accuser. It is well meanwhile to hear what the accuser has to say. Let Citizen Teulier have the floor. No matter what my personal feelings are, it is my duty to hear both sides of the case.

TEULIER. Citizens, I understand your first impulse; your refusal to believe what I say, and I have no wish to offend you. In your place I should myself no doubt have behaved likewise. But be a little patient. And first of all, before another moment passes—you see the dawn already—I ask you, Commandant, to send orders immediately postponing the execution—at least until after we reach a decision in this Council.

BUQUET. What's all this rigmarole? Tell us what's the trouble, in two words. We have more important things to attend to.

CHAPELAS. We have already condemned him. We can't repeal the order.

AN OFFICER. Reverse the first judgment?!

SECOND OFFICER. [*With a shrug.*] But we must do what Teulier asks.

QUESNEL. [*Writing a note and giving it to one of the officers of lower rank.*] Here is the order. [*The officer goes out.*]

TEULIER. [*With great calmness.*] D'Oyron is innocent. [*Protestations.*] I warn you, be careful. If you refuse to hear what I have to say, you will be guilty of a crime.

OFFICERS. [*Angrily.*] Proofs!—Give us your proofs! Let us go back and finish our fighting! Don't you hear the cannon?

TEULIER. Justice first.

BUQUET. Do you think you are more infallible than we?

TEULIER. No; but I abide by a scientific as well as patriotic principle: to accept nothing without weighing the evidence, and to believe nothing which my reason does not admit as self-evident.

OFFICERS. What a bore!—Thinks too much of himself!

BUQUET. Have the Academicians a monopoly of reason and commonsense?

VIDALOT. The aristocracy of the intelligent, Citizen, is as hateful as the other kind. We've had about enough of you scientists. We are all equal.

QUESNEL. [*To BUQUET.*] Silence! [*To TEULIER.*] Explain yourself.

TEULIER. [*Calmly as before.*] What if the spy, on whose evidence you condemned D'Oyron, were now to declare that he is innocent, what would you say? What would you say, Chapelas?

CHAPELAS. That he was trying to save his accomplice.

TEULIER. But if he declares that he gave the proofs to Verrat, who after accepting them, ordered him to say nothing about the matter, and promised him his life in exchange?

CHAPELAS. If he told that to me—I would kill him. [*The other officers evidently agree to this sentiment.*]

TEULIER. Yesterday afternoon Verrat had a secret interview with the spy.

CHAPELAS. Of course! He wanted all possible information for his night attack.

TEULIER. He afterward went to see Melchior Haupt, a professor in this city, where he found the documents proving D'Oyron's innocence. He made a secret search of the house.

CHAPELAS. With what results?

TEULIER. Verrat set forth on his expedition without telling anyone of his investigations.

CHAPELAS. Because they revealed nothing.

TEULIER. Or perhaps too much. [*Protests.*]

VIDALOT. And what does Melchior Haupt say?

TEULIER. I have just come from his house. It is empty. He has disappeared.

BUQUET. So these are your proofs? Is it for this that you turn the whole army upside down?—Are you mad?

CHAPELAS. His witnesses disappear the moment he needs them!

TEULIER. The spy is here: call him. Question him. And when Verrat comes, confront him.

OFFICERS. What's the use?—Can't do it?—Verrat is not open to suspicion.—You have no right to suspect him.—Is this the way we reward him?—We don't want to see the spy! If Verrat wants him, very well. Without his consent, I'm against it.

TEULIER. If you refuse to listen, how are you ever to learn the truth?

CHAPELAS. We have the letter. I don't want to know anything more.

TEULIER. But if the letter is a forgery!—You heard, Chapelas—you were with me—you heard D'Oyron speak of the plots that were directed against him?

CHAPELAS. I?

TEULIER. Yesterday morning.

CHAPELAS. You're dreaming.

TEULIER. You have a poor memory.—Very well, let us consider the letter. Don't you see it isn't true? No one but an enemy of D'Oyron's *would* write such a letter.—I beg you, think of that. [*He shows the letter to CHAPELAS and a few others, who look at it with indifference.* BUQUET, VIDALOT, and

others form into a little group whose attitude is frankly hostile.]

BUQUET. [*In an undertone to VIDALOT.*] Tell me, what reason has he for trying to clear D'Oyron?

VIDALOT. I don't know.

BUQUET. It's very strange. To accuse the best man of the lot of us, a Jacobin of the first rank, a Marius, a true general—to think of attacking him, and the very day of his wonderful victory!

VIDALOT. He is jealous.

OFFICER. Probably. That's the only explanation.

ANOTHER OFFICER. It's not right.

BUQUET. We can't doubt *him*, can we?

VIDALOT. You can never be sure. A reputation for integrity must be bought at the same price as everything else. It's just a little dearer, that is all. [*Excitement reigns out of doors.*]

QUESNEL. What's that? [*An officer goes to the window.*]

OFFICER. Verrat! They are carrying him in triumph. The soldiers are cheering him.

TEULIER. Citizens, let us not allow this noise to divert our attention. Let us continue. [*The noise increases. Other officers look out the window, or else go to the door, which now opens. VERRAT appears, carried on the shoulders of two Jacobins, a crown of leaves on his head. He is blackened with powder and dirt; his clothes are torn and in disorder. The soldiers crowd round him, shouting and dancing. They carry their red caps on the tips of their sabres and lances. A little child romps in and utters excited screams. A fife plays the "Ça ira." Through the door is seen a great crowd. The Jacobins carrying VERRAT bear him around the room, with absurd antics. Finally they put him on the table. The officers of the Council rise, with the exception*

of TEULIER. QUESNEL takes off his hat in silence. VERRAT salutes with his bare sabre.]

THE CROWD. Hurrah for the savior of Mayence!—General Verrat!—Long live General Verrat! [VERRAT motions to the soldiers to release him.]

VERRAT. Fine! That's all right. Leave me here, and get out, your rascals! We have something to discuss. [*The crowd retires. VERRAT descends from the table.*] Citizens, I salute you! I have kept my promise. The Red Main at last deserves its name.—And now what do you want with me? I received your order in the midst of battle. I have left everything out of respect for you. Speak: I am at your service. But let me go soon again. I've only begun. I hold the enemy by the throat; now I'm ready to bleed him.

QUESNEL. [*Frigidly.*] We regret, Citizen, that we were forced to recall you from your victories. Your glory is attacked. It is to your interest, and ours, to clear yourself without delay.

VERRAT. Who? I? I am accused, eh? While I am shedding my blood by the bucketful for the Patrie, does someone dare attack me? What is the charge? Who accuses me? What son of a pig—?

QUESNEL. It is said that you had proofs of D'Oyron's innocence, and that you have destroyed them.

VERRAT. Good God! Who is the damned dog—the traitor—the coward? Where is he? Where is he? I'll spit in his vile face,—I'll tear his flesh to bits! Where is he hiding? Bring him to me.

TEULIER. He is present.

VERRAT. Who is it?

TEULIER. I.

VERRAT. You! Why—you're joking! Repeat what you said. Oh! [*He pretends to feel faint.*]

Citizens, I—I—this is too much for me. A—friend in whom I had the greatest confidence, a fellow who has fought by my side twenty times—I’ve even saved his life. I—I beg your pardon—I— I’ll get over it in a moment.—Wait! [*Raging.*] The vile hang-dog!—Well, I won’t degrade myself by answering!

TEULIER. Verrat, believe me, this is very painful to me, but in the interest of Justice—!

VERRAT. Don’t speak to me! I’ll have your skin, but I won’t answer you. And if you, Citizen Representative, aren’t afraid to open your mouth, speak! I’m ready.

QUESNEL. Verrat, Teulier accuses you of having received from the spy incontrovertible proof that the letter to D’Oyron was a ruse intended to implicate D’Oyron,—sent to him by the nobles; and that instead of bringing the proof to us, you forced the spy to keep silent. What have you to say?

VERRAT. I swear that I saved the Patrie.

QUESNEL. Citizen, we all recognize your military virtues. But there is a definite accusation against you, and you must answer it.

VERRAT. Never! I refuse to lower myself. I’ll wash myself clean in the blood of that traitor soon enough. It is not my place to discuss with him. I’m no phrasemaker, I’m no parlor orator like him—I’m no lecturer for aristocrats! I act, I don’t talk. Let my accusers roll up their sleeves and follow me into the courtyard. That’s my answer. [*He brandishes his naked sabre, and brings it down violently on the table.*]

TEULIER. I will follow you, Verrat—my life is nothing. But before I make reparation to you, you must make one to Justice. She is the one who is most grievously offended; you ought to respect her. Put up your sabre, and answer her questions.

VERRAT. [*Furiously.*] Listen to the Jesuit, the honey oozing from his lips! His gizzard's burst.—I won't answer him. If anyone doubts my patriotism, let him go down to the river, and see the banks, choked with the men I've killed! My wounds speak in my defence. [*He tears open his coat and shirt.*] This breast red with my own blood and the blood of the enemy—my skin black with powder—my hair singed with fire—my clothes hacked to pieces! I know what I'm worth, and I am not afraid to proclaim it. Modesty is a virtue for imbeciles and women.—Citizens, I ask you, am I worthy of the Patrie. [*The officers cheer him.*]

TEULIER. That is no way to argue. It is absurd. Forget what you have done for the Patrie. All of us, Verrat, have deserved well of her. You have done your duty—no more—as we all have done. No one here begrudges his blood. Hundreds of obscure soldiers are as good as you: your soldiers and mine, and those who sleep at this moment under German soil. Be a little humble— [*Interruptions from the officers.*]

CHAPELAS. He's mad with jealousy.

BUQUET. Representative, don't allow him to insult those who honor the Patrie!

QUESNEL. Silence, both of you! The charge having been made, it is my duty to make it clear to the accused. I leave him free to answer or not, as he thinks fit. But he must listen to the principal charges.—It is charged, Verrat, that yesterday you made a secret search in the home of Melchior Haupt in order to find proofs of D'Oyron's innocence, and that these proofs were called to your attention by the spy. Is that true? What have you done with the proofs? Have you anything to say? [VERRAT, who has listened to QUESNEL in dumb fury, looks at TEU-

LIER, curses, and then turns his back on QUESNEL.]

CHAPELAS. Why should Verrat want D'Oyron out of the way?

TEULIER. He hates him.

OFFICERS. We all hate him!

VERRAT. I tell you, this doesn't concern me alone: it concerns the honor of every officer present.

TEULIER. No, no, Verrat; don't try to evade the question. I accuse you, and you alone, and on the grounds that I have mentioned.

VERRAT. [*Quickly turning to him.*] And I accuse you!

TEULIER. Me?

VERRAT. Yes, you. You are paid by D'Oyron to ruin me.

TEULIER. I do not hate you.

VERRAT. You pretend to be my friend, and yet you try to bring dishonor upon me.

TEULIER. I am doing my duty.

VERRAT. Your duty as a mad dog,—a friend of the aristocrats!

TEULIER. So you refuse to answer my charges?

VERRAT. I'll answer them with cold steel, not otherwise.

TEULIER. Citizens, as it is impossible to get anything out of this man, and as my word as well as his is doubted, I demand that he be questioned in the presence of the spy. *He* will bring facts to light.

CHAPELAS. We are only wasting our time.

TEULIER. I insist.

VERRAT. Yes; bring him in, and let me slice him to bits!

TEULIER. He is in there.

QUESNEL. Bring him in. [*A soldier goes out. There is excitement outside. A church clock strikes six. Cannon boom in the distance. Murmurs arise*

from the crowd. Music sounds and the measured tread of soldiers.]

OFFICERS. Six o'clock. The hour of execution!

BUQUET. [*Going to the window.*] They are waiting for the traitor to be brought forth. The square is full. [*The soldier who went for the spy reënters.*]

SOLDIER. Citizen Representative—

QUESNEL. Well, where is the prisoner?

SOLDIER. He is dead. [*General astonishment.*]

TEULIER. What do you say!

SOLDIER. [*Calmly, as he makes a descriptive gesture.*] Strangled.

QUESNEL. Murdered?

SOLDIER. Probably. [*TEULIER gives QUESNEL an inscrutable look.*]

VERRAT. The dog was afraid. He did the wise thing.

BUQUET. Fine witnesses! One dead and one who has escaped! [*The officers shrug their shoulders. TEULIER, crushed for a moment, rises.*]

TEULIER. No matter! His death merely confirms my doubts.

VERRAT. [*Not understanding at first.*] What? What? [*Shouting.*] You godforsaken blackguard, I'll kill you! [*He rushes at TEULIER with his drawn sabre. The officers intervene.*] Citizens, I am the victim of a vile conspiracy. Look at my accuser! He resorts to the dirtiest insults; he's as bad as the worst Prussian spy. He is one. They tremble before me in battle, but they never miss a chance to ruin me. They have bought this miserable wretch, unworthy to be called a Frenchman. So far I have spared him: our former friendship restrained me. Now he drives me to desperate measures, I am going to have my say. I am no longer defending myself:

I am bringing definite charges. I accuse Teulier of having sold himself to the Prussians, of being an accomplice of the Royalists, the Rolandistes, and the aristocrats—all of them! I will prove what I say. I've always been suspicious of him: he always patronized the patriots; he never showed proper respect for the Convention; he always admired the enemy. Everything about him is suspicious.—*And he knows German!* I'll give you proofs!—Choose now between him and me! One of us is a traitor. I refuse to leave this room until he is condemned or I am.

TEULIER. [*Calmly, clearly, but with pent-up emotion.*] Citizens, these insults do not in the least perturb me. You know what my life has been: it is an open book. I am poor: I left my family, my position, my rest, and dearest of all, my work, to put myself at the service of the Patrie. I made no conditions. I ask for no title. I have fought in eleven battles. I will not show my wounds—such appeals are the resort of prostitutes. I am sufficiently ashamed to have to remind you of my services. I detest actors. I dislike exhibiting my body and my heart. We are grown men: we ought to appeal only to reason. Reason, reason, I say. When the voice of reason is raised, no one can resist it. I obey reason, and to reason I sacrifice my friendships, my life, my all, if need be. You will hear that voice, too. You must hear it, no matter how hard you try to stop your ears. It will be stronger than you, and it will see that justice is done. Do not accuse me of presumption and inflated pride: I myself am nothing; Truth is all. Every soul that once sees Truth face to face and tries to deny it, commits moral suicide. Your efforts to shut your eyes are vain; you have *seen*, you *know*—as I have seen and know. Obey as

I obey. Obey, let the cost be what it will, because you must obey. [*Dead silence.*]

QUESNEL. Citizens, shall we send away these two men while we deliberate?

CHAPELAS. [*Who has been speaking in an undertone with the officers.*] No use, Citizen Representative; we are all in agreement. Yesterday we passed fair judgment on the case, and we see no sufficient reason for changing our minds today. On behalf of my colleagues, I wish to state that the sentence can in no wise be modified. Let justice follow her course. In the interest of the Patrie and of all humanity, and in order that the prisoner may not be kept in further suspense, we ask you to order that the traitor be executed without delay. [*Silence follows. QUESNEL, without the least visible emotion, writes an order, which the soldier takes out of the room a moment later.*] We have another duty to perform. Charges have been made against one of our number. The man who accused him resorted to insulting expressions and allegations which might be called libelous. These are without foundation. In so doing, he weakened the morale of the army, compromised our victory, and disturbed the operations of the army on a night of battle. He risked ruining everything by bringing these charges. Justice must be done, so that in the future—

VERRAT. Don't worry, Chapelas. I'll take charge of that.

CHAPELAS. This concerns us all. We have all been attacked, and it is our duty to punish such acts as tend to demoralize the Patrie. Out of consideration for the services rendered by Citizen Teulier we agree to set aside the charge of treason made by Verrat, and maintain merely that he has allowed himself to be misled through motives of personal envy and

animosity, unworthy of a soldier. Comrades, it is for you to decide: what shall we do with him?

OFFICERS. Send him to the Committee of Public Safety!

CHAPELAS. You hear, Citizen Representative? Let us lay the matter before the Committee as soon as possible. We leave it to them to decide.

BUQUET and VIDALOT. [*Rising.*] That's settled: he won't trouble us any more!

VERRAT. Citizens, I shall not thank you. You have done your duty in defending the cause of justice; but I congratulate you on having once more detected a trap laid by the aristocrats. You see with what a network of crimes we are continually surrounded. Let us stand firmly shoulder to shoulder, and blaze our way with our axes. Europe may insult us as much as she likes: we answer with our thunderbolts! [*The crowd outdoors becomes uproarious. Cheers ring out, and hoots and whistling.*]

OFFICERS. [*At the window.*] He's coming out of the prison.—You'd hardly recognize him with his hair cut short.—What arrogance! [*Silence reigns. The officers are now all at the windows. TEULIER and QUESNEL alone remain seated at the table. VERRAT turns his back on the crowd. QUESNEL is impassive; TEULIER sits with his face in his hands. A monotonous voice is heard reading in the distance.*]

BUQUET. He's reading the sentence.

TEULIER. [*In agony, he says in a strangled voice to QUESNEL.*] Quesnel, Quesnel—in the name of God! One word—one word is enough! I told the truth—you know I did—you know it! [*The roll of drums is heard.*]

QUESNEL. [*Rising and taking off his hat.*] For the Patrie!

OFFICERS. [*Solemnly.*] Long live the Nation!
[*The crowd cheers.*]

VERRAT. And now, Victory! [*They go out noisily.*
TEULIER is crushed. QUESNEL, who is the last to
leave, passes near him.]

QUESNEL. Good-bye, Teulier. I warned you. You
brought it on yourself.

TEULIER. [*He rises and says bravely, proudly.*]
Don't pity me. I prefer to be what I am than what
you are.

QUESNEL. My name and my conscience may be
soiled, but the Patrie must be saved!

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